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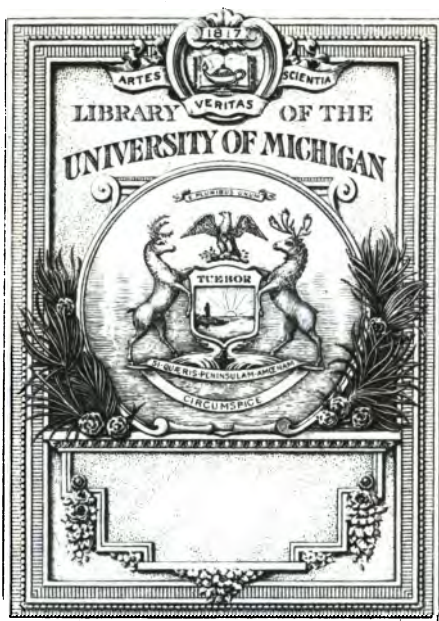
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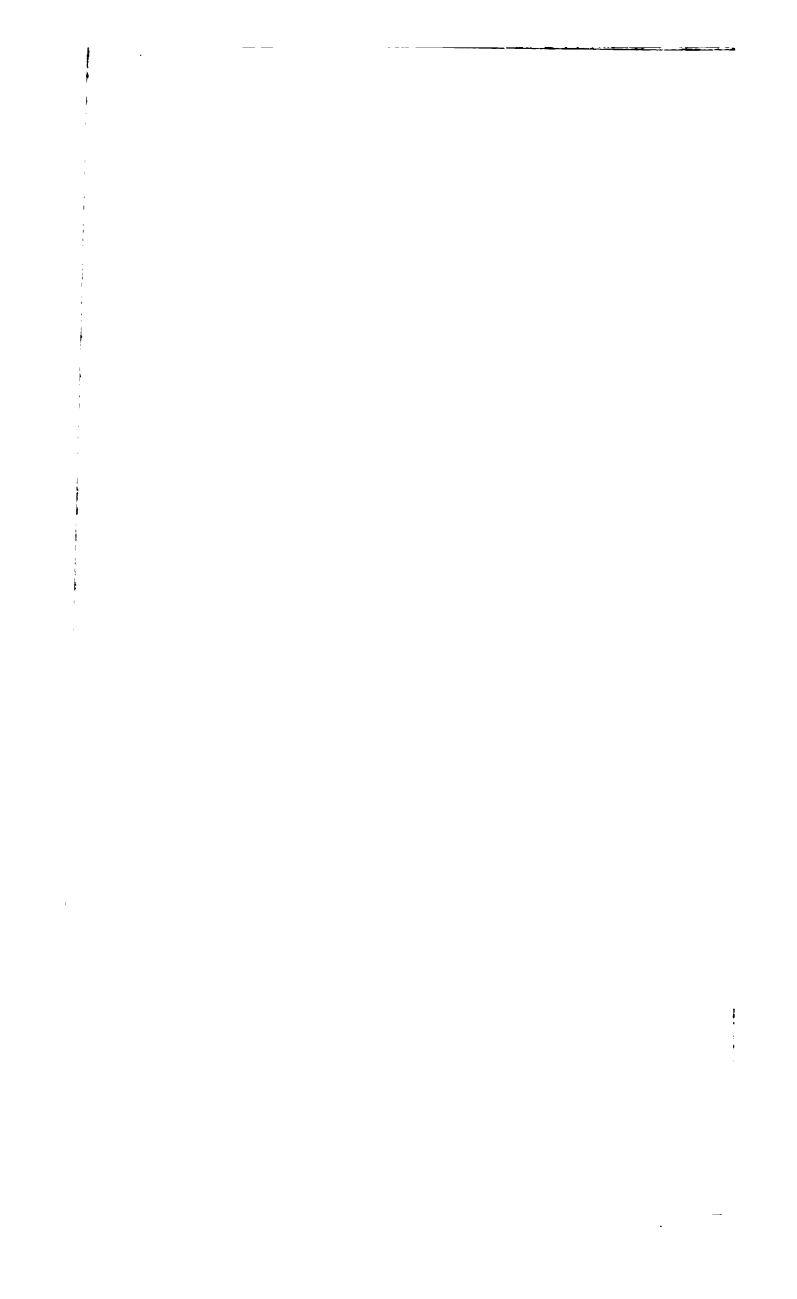
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Porter, Sir James

# OBSERVATIONS



ON THE

Character

RELIGION, LAW, GOVERNMENT,

AND

MANNERS,

OF THE TURKS.

VOL. I.

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*—fas fit mihi visa referre.* OVID. Ep. xvi.

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# OBSERVATIONS, &c.

## CHAP. I.

*The Difficulty of obtaining information in  
Turkey:—Characters of the Turks.*

**W**RITERS who never stirred out of their own country, \* and travellers who have run † over immense regions with hasty and transitory pace, have given us long accounts of various countries and people; evidently collected from the idle report and absurd tradition of the ignorant vulgar, from whom only they can have received those relations, which we see heaped together with so undiscerning a credulity.

THE Turks have abundantly shared this treatment: without taking notice  
B therefore

\* Thevenot, librarian to the French king, was never out of Europe. Gemelli Carreri, a Neapolitan gentleman, who, for many years, never quitted his chamber, during a long indisposition, amused himself with writing a voyage round the world; giving characters of men, and descriptions of countries, as if he had actually visited them.

† Tournefort, Paul Lucas, Pocock, &c.

therefore of what even the most correct writers may have said, I shall throw out, so far as reached my own knowledge, some short observations and general strictures on the religion, law, government, and manners of that people. If what I advance has no other merit, it will at least have that of being strictly true.

It is extremely difficult to come at information in Turkey; enquiries give disgust. The Mahomedan law is so strict and positive, that it confines, and binds the understanding of its sectaries within the narrow limits of what the *Koran* teaches; and renders them inconvertible with the rest of mankind; especially on the subject of religion, or of their own customs. Strangers who do not, and cannot perfectly understand the language, must converse by interpreters; but these dare not enter into enquiries they think will give the least offence: on these subjects therefore, they never do, nor will interpret; if put to it, evasion is their refuge, and both the question they make, and answer they return you, will be merely their own.

It may then be asked; how are we to be informed in Turkey? I must answer,  
very

very imperfectly. A long and continued practice in that country, many connections and dependencies amongst different ranks of people, may, by mere chance, lead us to some truth; but certain it is, that we have hitherto very imperfect accounts of their religion or of their manners.

To trace correctly the mere outline of any national character, is, I am sensible, a difficult task; of the Turks it is peculiarly so: I shall nevertheless make the attempt.

THE Turks are in general a sagacious, thinking people; in the pursuit of their own interest, or fortune, their attention is fixt on one object, and they persevere with great steadiness until they attain their purpose. They are in common life seemingly obliging and humane, not without appearances of gratitude: perhaps all or either of these, when extended towards Christians, are practised with a view of some advantage. Interest is their supreme good; where that becomes an object of competition, all attachment of friendship, all ties of consanguinity are dissolved; they become desperate, no barrier can stop their pursuit, or abate their rancour

towards their competitors. In their demeanor they are rather hypochondriac, grave, sedate, and passive; but when agitated by passion, furious, raging, ungovernable; big with dissimulation; jealous, suspicious\*, and vindictive beyond  
con-

\* The Zonanas, famous Jews, residing at Constantinople, are purveyors to the whole body of Janissaries throughout the empire; receive all their monies, supply them with all necessaries, advance cash to their (a) *Agas*, to all their officers, and even to the common men. The father of the present Zonana had the same employment; he lived to a very advanced age, in high reputation, and had acquired great weight and influence with that turbulent formidable corps. Tiriacki Mehemet Pascha, who, in 1746, had the seals conferred on him as Vizir, raised himself from a low beginning: two and twenty years before he attained his dignity, he was an ordinary *Katib*, or scribe, to that militia; at which time, on some dispute of interest with Zonana, he declared, with violent asseveration, that if he ever had it in his power, Zonana's should be the first head he would strike off: in effect, he had been but a few days Vizir, before he executed his purpose; time could not mitigate his revenge; he took the old man's head off even at the risk of his own security; for so great was the affection the  
Janissaries

(a) Generals—or commandants:

conception; perpetuating revenge from generation to generation. In matters of religion, tenacious, supercilious, and morose.

Janissaries bore Zonana, it was thought this act of violence might cause a rebellion.

Turks have been known to come from the frontiers of Persia into Asia minor, and Thrace, to revenge the death of a grandfather, uncle, or cousin, many years after the offence has been committed; it is usual for the parent to remind his child, the uncle his nephew, of any injury their family or relations have suffered, and excite them continually to revenge. I wish it were not true, that in many of the Greek islands, among those who call themselves Christians, the same practice was not prevalent.

The christian *Drugomen*, or interpreters, are uncommonly generous to the meanest, the most indigent Turk, treating them with deference and politeness: when the reason is asked, they tell you, they have seen so many, from the very lowest, rise to the highest stations, that it is necessary to guard against their revenge; in truth they fear them; education and observation lead them to it.

## C H A P. II.

*Of the Mahomedan religion — and the pilgrimage to Mecca.*

**A**MONG the many singular and whimsical conceits of a \* modern writer, we meet with pertinent remarks and shrewed observations, not always indeed merely his own; he tells us, “ that  
 “ to judge properly of a religion, we  
 “ must not take it from the books of  
 “ those who profess it; we must see how  
 “ it is practised in a country where it is  
 “ established, to know what it is; we  
 “ shall there find it a very different thing;  
 “ each has its traditions, peculiar interpretations, customs, prejudices; these  
 “ make the very essence of their faith,  
 “ and these must be combined with what  
 “ their books profess, before we can be  
 “ able to judge of it.”

To ascertain, therefore, the true spirit of Mahomedanism, we must appeal to an impartial observation, of the real influence

\* J. J. Rousseau, Em. liv. iv.



ence it has on the practice of its followers.

THE Mahomedan belief at first sight appears extremely simple : what they first require from a profelyte to their religion, is solely the repetition of a short creed : *Allah il Allah, Mubamed resoul Allah* ; that is, " There is but one God, and Mahomet " is his Prophet." He is then confirmed by ablution and a short prayer, and thus received into the number of true believers. Circumcision generally follows.

HENCE some have pretended, and many might be led to think, that it is a religion by no means clashing violently with reason ; the great basis on which it is founded, being the unity of the Deity.

BUT this plausible initiation is only a first step, from whence the convert must plunge into the belief of all the absurdities of the *Koran*, every article of which he must receive as revelation from God, written in heaven, and sent down by the Almighty in mercy to his chosen people ; he must firmly believe that repeating this revelation so many times a year, observing rigorously the fast of *Ramazán*, performing

ablutions \* on different parts of the body, carefully extending them to certain exact spaces and critical proportions; going the pilgrimage to Mecca; drinking a potion of water, in which their prophets old robe † has been dipt; repeating some, or the whole, of the ninety-nine names of the different attributes of the Deity, on a string of ninety-nine beads; are all devotional duties, so essentially necessary to a true believer, that without them the purest heart and the sincerest faith are insufficient to recommend him to divine favour; these practices he likewise holds to be the efficacious and the indispensable means, by which to atone for all his crimes and immoralities.

SUCH

\* A *Reis Effendi*, or secretary of state, reputed of great ability and learning, sent for a christian *Drugoman*, or interpreter, on very urgent business; he attended, and found the secretary deeply engaged in dispute with his son-in-law on the important question, to what exact height their hands and arms, feet or legs, should be washed, to render themselves truly acceptable to God.

† The Grand Signior is guardian of this robe, he himself distributes the water annually after the *Beiram*, in small phials to all his courtiers, and they to their followers and friends.

**SUCH** absurdities might be looked on, as inventions contrived by Mahomet, merely to amuse and catch his ignorant and simple followers. They would indeed be of little consequence to the moral order of the world, if the conclusions drawn from them by the Turks, were not, in the highest degree, injurious to the rest of mankind: for, hence they deduce, that all who are not of their belief, and embrace not the doctrines of their prophet, are \* objects of Divine vengeance and abhorrence; consequently of their detestation, on whom they are to exercise violence, fraud, and rapine.

**THE** force and efficacy of this principle operates so effectually, that Mahomedans are ever ready to demonstrate their zeal by spurning on the persons, ravishing the property, and even destroying the very existence of those who profess a different religion. Ask them; let them be candid and speak plain, they will frankly confess, that such is their duty, so they are commanded, and that they are convinced it is most meritorious in the sight of God and his prophet.

B 5

THEIR

\* Koran, Sale's Edit. chap. iii. p. 50. chap. v. p. 83.

THEIR superior thirst for gold is the potent preservative of those Christians and Jews who live amongst them. These are an inexhaustible treasure to government; a source constantly flowing to supply the wants of multitudes, even of the powerful and the ambitious: hence therefore, religious tyranny and the inveterate prejudice of enthusiasm, are in some sort subdued and vanquished.

THE first effort of Mahomedan education is to root deep in the minds of their children, a high contempt of all other religions; from babes they are carefully taught to distinguish them by the opprobrious name of *Giaur*, or Infidel.

THE habit becomes so forcible by the time they are men, that they can use no other term; they follow them with it in every street, and will often affect pushing against them with the utmost contempt.

MEN of Dignity, or those of a rank above the populace, behave with seeming courtesy and complaisance, though often with a sort of stern superiority; but you are scarce dismissed, however civilly, before they will honour you with the high title of *Dumus*,  
or

or hog, the animal they hold the most odious, detestable, and impure of the whole creation.

**TAKE** the most miserable Turk dependant on a Christian, one who lives by him, would starve without him; let the Christian require of him the salute of peace, the *Salem Alek*, or, "Peace be with you," he would sooner die than give it; he would think himself abominated by God, and that his prophet would look down on him with indignation as an infidel and apostate; it is reserved solely for Mussulmen, true believers. The utmost they dare say, and many of them think it saying too much, is *Chair olla*, "Good be with you."

**THEY** are enjoined by their religion to extend it by making converts; and to press all those of any other, at least three times to embrace it. Some affect a forcible and unbecoming zeal; others more moderate, content themselves with a mere formal requisition; but either of them will change their tone, according as they conceive the person they address may be useful to them or not.

**THEY**

THERE is no command in the *Koran* more energetic, nor held in greater respect by Mussulmen, than the pilgrimage to Mecca. A *badgi*, or pilgrim is always reckoned regenerate; he who has not been there, laments, he deplores his own situation in life, which has not permitted him to perform this duty; and is anxious for the state of his soul. This pilgrimage is, indeed, the main basis of Mahomedanism; for whoever performs it methodically, and omits not any part, is confident he recommends himself effectually to the favour of God, that he is absolved from all sin, and rendered permanently acceptable to him.

SINCE, therefore, an exact account of all a Turk performs at Mecca, must give us as true an idea of the Mahomedan religion, as if we beheld their practice; this pilgrimage being their main route to salvation; I shall exhibit a short history of it, extracted from the journal of a true Mussulman, who seems to have noted down every part as soon as he had performed it.

‘ AFTER the month of their fast, or  
 ‘ the *Ramazán*, the caravan of Damascus,  
 ‘ composed of the pilgrims from Europe  
 ‘ and

‘ and Asia Minor, the Arabian, and the  
 ‘ principal one from Cairo, set out from  
 ‘ Mecca. They all have their stated time  
 ‘ of departure, and their regular stages.  
 ‘ That from Cairo begins the journey  
 ‘ thirty days after Ramazan; and the con-  
 ‘ ductors so regulate each day’s march,  
 ‘ that they arrive in forty days; that is,  
 ‘ just before the *Corban*, or great *Beiram*  
 ‘ of sacrifice.

‘ FIVE or six days before that festival,  
 ‘ the three caravans, consisting of about  
 ‘ 200,000 men, and 300,000 beasts of  
 ‘ burthen, unite and encamp at some  
 ‘ miles from Mecca.

‘ THE pilgrims form themselves into  
 ‘ small detachments, and enter the town  
 ‘ to perform the ceremonies preparatory  
 ‘ to that great one of sacrifice. They are  
 ‘ led through a street of continual ascent,  
 ‘ until they arrive at a gate on an emin-  
 ‘ ence, called the Gate of Health; from  
 ‘ thence they see the great mosque, which  
 ‘ encloses the house of Abraham; they sa-  
 ‘ lute it with the profoundest devotion,  
 ‘ repeating twice, *Salem Alek Irusoul Alla*;  
 ‘ that is, “Peace be with the Ambassador  
 ‘ of God.” ‘ Thence, at some distance,  
 ‘ they mount up five steps, to a large  
 ‘ platform

platform faced with stone, where they offer up their prayers. Then they descend on the other side of it, and advance towards two similar arches, at some distance from each other, which they pass thro' with great silence and devotion. This ceremony must be performed seven times.

From hence they proceed to the great mosche which encloses the house of Abraham; enter the mosche, and walk seven times round the little building contained within it; saying, "This is the house of God, and of his servant Abraham;" then kissing with reverence a black stone, said to be descended white from heaven, they go to the famous well called † *Zun-Zun*, and plunge into

\* This stone, our Mussulman tells us, fell from heaven, accompanied with a voice, saying, "Wherever this stone falls, there you must build the house of God; and from that house he will hear the prayers of sinners." That on its descent it was as white as snow, and is become black from the touch of such a number of sinful lips; for the pilgrims are obliged to kiss it, otherwise they cannot be cleared of their sins.

† This well the angel shewed Agar when she was.



‘ into it with all their cloaths, continually  
 ‘ repeating *Toba Alla, Toba Alla*, “ For-  
 ‘ giveness God, Forgiveness God.”

‘ “THEY then drink a draught of that  
 ‘ fetid turbid water, and depart.

‘ THE duty of bathing and drinking  
 ‘ they are obliged to pass through once;  
 ‘ but those who will gain paradise before  
 ‘ the others, must perform it once a day,  
 ‘ during the stay of the caravan.

‘ AT fifteen miles from the town of  
 ‘ Mecca, there is a hill, or small moun-  
 ‘ tain, called *Ghiabal Arafata*, or, “ The  
 ‘ Mount of Forgiveness;” it is about two  
 ‘ miles in circumference, a most delicious  
 ‘ spot; on it Adam and Eve met, after  
 ‘ the Lord, for their transgression, had  
 ‘ separated them forty years; here they  
 ‘ cohabited, and lived in excess of hap-  
 ‘ piness, having built a house on this  
 ‘ mount, called *Beith Adam*, i. e. Adam’s  
 ‘ House. The night before, or the eve  
 ‘ of the day of sacrifice, the three cara-  
 ‘ vans, each ranged in a triangular form,  
 ‘ circum-

was distressed in the desert, and found no water  
 for her son Ishmael; it is called by the Arabs,  
*Zem-Zem*.

‘ circumvire this mountain; during this-  
 ‘ whole night the people rejoice, clamour,  
 ‘ and riot, fire cannon, muskets, pistols,  
 ‘ and fire-works, with the continued noise  
 ‘ of drums and trumpets. On the day, a  
 ‘ profound silence succeeds, they slay their  
 ‘ sheep, offer up their sacrifice on the  
 ‘ mountain, with all the demonstrations of  
 ‘ the most profound devotion.

‘ On a sudden a scheik, or santone,  
 ‘ rushes from amidst them, mounted on  
 ‘ his camel, he ascends five steps, render-  
 ‘ ed practicable for that purpose, and in a  
 ‘ set sermon preaches to the people.’

“ RETURN praise and thanks for the  
 “ infinite and immense benefits given by  
 “ God to Mahometans, through the me-  
 “ diation of his most beloved friend and  
 “ prophet Mahomet; for that he has de-  
 “ livered them from the slavery and bon-  
 “ dage of sin and idolatry in which they  
 “ were plunged; has given them the  
 “ house of Abraham, from whence they  
 “ can be heard, and their petitions grant-  
 “ ed. Also the Mountain of Forgiveness,  
 “ by means of which they can implore  
 “ him, and obtain pardon and remission of  
 “ all their sins.

FOR

“ FOR that the blessed, pious, and merciful God, giver of all good gifts, commanded his secretary Abraham to build himself a house at Mecca, whence his descendants might pray to him the Almighty, and their desires be fulfilled.

“ ON this command, all the mountains in the world ran, as it were, each ambitious to assist the secretary of the Lord, and to furnish a stone towards erecting the holy house; all except this poor little mountain, which, through mere indigence, could not contribute a stone, it continued therefore thirty years grievously afflicted; at length, the eternal God observed its anguish, and moved with pity at its long suffering, broke forth, saying, I can forbear no longer, my child, your bitter lamentations have reached my ears, and I now declare, that all those who henceforth come to visit the house of my friend Abraham, shall not be absolved of their sins, if they do not first reverence you, and celebrate on you the holy sacrifice, which I have commanded to my people through the mouth of my prophet Mahomet.—Love God—pray—give alms.”——“ After this sermon,

‘ mon, the people salute the mountain and  
‘ depart.’

INDEPENDENT of any argument to be deduced from this account of the pilgrimage to Mecca; the ineffimable value and sovereign importance of it in the conception of the people, and even in the eye of government, would have appeared evident to any one present at Constantinople, when a singular accident happened to the caravan returning from Mecca to Damascus in the year 1757.

The pascha of Damascus, is generally the conductor of the caravan, or *Emir Hadge*: Ezade Paschaw had enjoyed that post many years; he had sovereign credit amongst the Arabs, had married into one of their chief tribes, his possessions in the neighbourhood of Damascus were incredibly extensive, and his generosity equalled them; the kislar-aga, who was in power the year before, and governed in the seraglio, blinded by venality, and not foreseeing consequences, removed Ezade Paschaw to the paschalyck of Aleppo, and named to that of Damascus an obscure man, on whom he had just conferred the three tails; he became of course Emir Hadge, or conductor

tor to the caravan: his succeeding Ezade Paschaw was crime sufficient in the eyes of the principal Arabian tribes, but his refusing them a small tribute, the payment of which had been suspended by \* Ezade Paschaw's credit, rendered them furious and implacable; they assembled to the number of 40,000, attacked the caravan, beat the paschaw of Sidon, who waited on the road to supply it with provision, slaughtered numbers of the 100,000 pilgrims which composed it, and plundered all their effects.

NEVER was consternation greater, among all ranks of people, than on this event; when the fugitive soldiers who guarded the caravan, returned to Damascus, they fell a sacrifice to the citizens' fury

\* Some time after, the Porte, determined to remove Ezade Paschaw from Aleppo to Urfa; but he was so beloved by the people of Aleppo, that they refused admittance to the new paschaw, and stood on the defensive. — The Porte passively submitted for the present, but however engaged Ezade Paschaw next year to accept the government of Urfa; he was not long there before the vizir Ragib Paschaw, by stratagem, had him seized, and made him atone for what they called his disobedience with his head.

fury, as betrayers of the faith; at Constantinople they looked upon their religion as lost, and the gates of salvation shut up. The depression was inconceivably great, and it was universal; grief and despair was vented only in sullen murmurs, no one dared to speak out; the sultan was *Oursus*, Unfortunate: he was scarce safe on his throne. The argument in his favour, was, that this mischief happened in the time \* of sultan Osman his predecessor: it excused the prince, but did not abate the anguish, or tranquillize the perturbed minds of his subjects, anxious for the state of their souls. Himself, not less agitated, conferred continually with the vizir; every precaution was taken

\* On sultan Mustapha's accession, the kizlar-aga, who, in sultan Osman's reign, had removed Ezade Paschaw from Damascus, was, for various misdemeanours, banished by the vizir to Rhodes; but on discovering that his venality and corruption had principally occasioned this deplorable Event; the ministry, glad to exculpate themselves and appease the people, by fixing the odium on such an object, sent for his head, which was placed between the Seraglio gates, with a large label on it, expressing, *That he was a traitor to the faith, and the cause of that sacrilegious attack of the Arabs on the Mecca caravan.*

ken to secure quiet in the capital; but what made his concern the greater, was the loss of some sacred relicks of the prophet; by the display of these on the prophet's birth-day, he had proposed to augment the devotion, and heighten the solemnity with which that festival is celebrated.

THIS pilgrimage, of such spiritual importance, has been the cause of all the wars between the Persians and the Ottomans; for the latter, who are followers of Omar, think the Persians, or the sect of Aly; unworthy of salvation, and no possible objects of divine favour: they would not therefore, were it in their power to prevent it, permit them to enter Mecca, and defile that sacred way, destined for, and left open to, the truly orthodox only; but the sect of Aly will not tamely suffer the road of Paradise to be thus barred against them. No earthly claim could excite such cruel vengeance, or cause such horrible effusions of blood, as this dispute has occasioned amongst the different sects of Mahomedans.

HENCE it is, that the Persians in all their negotiations of peace with the Ottoman Porte, insist on a full and entire liberty for the followers of Aly to go unmolested

lefted on the pilgrimage to Mecca. This important stipulation makes up almost the whole of the treaty of 1746\*.

\* The emperor of Morocco, with whom the Grand Seignor has scarce a connexion, and who is almost unknown at Constantinople, sent very lately two ambassadors, with presents of great value, merely and solely to secure this pilgrimage to his subjects.

C H A P.



## C H A P. III.

*Of Sects.*

**W**HILST there are men, there will be a diversity of opinions and sentiments, especially concerning matters of faith.

THE herd of mankind are, indeed, familiarized with any religion; the nurse throws in the first ideas, the parent or priest confirms, education rivets it immoveably, it grows with their growth, and becomes inalienable from the man.

BUT this remark, though generally true, is not universally so; many must and will think for themselves: and of this number, some prompted by enthusiasm and intemperate zeal, others by vanity and a false ambition, will be led to promulge their heterodox conceptions, either on a presumption of truth, or the affectation of singularity, and of differing in opinion from the rest of mankind.

It is absurd for laws to pretend to bridle thought, or to inflict pains and penalties on the understanding; the more opinions are restrained, the more men become obstinate, tenacious, and determined; contract a desperate contempt of all laws and government, and set them at defiance.

WE ought therefore by no means to be surpris'd, when we find a variety of sects among Mahometans: no religions from the beginning of the world have been exempt from them. Let them exist, provided the moral order of society is not disturbed; enthusiasm will sometimes rage with greater zeal than wise men would wish, but generally it flames, and at last extinguishes like an *ignis fatuus*. Thus, indeed, the Turks seem to think; executions, tortures, pains, and penalties inflicted on account of religion, are never heard of among them,

IF the rituals of the established religion are performed, and a convenient conformity observed, they enquire no farther about it.

• Religious

\* Religious disputes are unknown amongst the Turks. They have not the

C 2

art

\* Mr. Reland, in the preface to his *Relig. Mabomet.* encourages the study of the Arabian language as a means of converting the Mahometans to the Christian religion; by enabling us to demonstrate to them the falshood and imposture of their own: he acknowledges, that content with their *Koran*, they entrench themselves secure from all assaults of arguments, on the implicit belief of its doctrines, and will not dispute. That, nevertheless, they formerly disputed concerning religion, though in his own time they could not. He supports his opinion by quotations from Sollerus, who tells us, that Raimond Lully had publickly disputed with Turks in Africa; and from Maracci, who relates, that many missionaries of the church of Rome had done it with success; and what is more, \* Guadagnola informs us, that a Romanist having written a book called *Speculum verum ostendens*, or, the Mirror of Christianity; Acmed ben Zin Ulabadin answered him, under the title of *The Polisher of the Mirror*, &c. and that Abbe Renaudot, in his History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria, has collected from several libraries manuscripts of disputations, Jews with Turks, Monks with Jews; the Metropolitane

\* Professor of the Arabian language at Rome in the last century.

art of printing; and I am apt to think, the difficulty of transcribing numerous volumes

tropolite of Nisibis in Diarbekir with Abulkacem; and, strange to relate, Abulcoza, or Abucaza's Apologetical Conference in favour of the Christian religion, before the calif Almamon, by Ebnafal, &c.

I shall only observe, that the Turks are invariable in their manners and customs; whence in general I must conclude, that their conduct in religious matters remains on the inviolable plan of their ancestors. They are bred to an implicit faith in their *Koran*, so that a very doubt of its veracity is criminal; this Reland confesses: but he surely forgot that Raimond Lully's first sermon brought on him martyrdom, at the age of eighty, in Mauritania. The fate of St. Stephen prevented him from preaching a second time.

He has likewise forgot that the Romish missionaries from the beginning, and to this day, have dealt merely in imposition and pious fraud: that in the accounts they send to the Propaganda at Rome, they constantly magnify their own merit and success, hoping, by that means, to continue in the liberty they enjoy during their mission; or if that cannot be effected, to obtain higher estimation and superior employment in their convents at home, so as to render that slavery tolerable, which they generally repent of having submitted to, and which they ascribe either to their own childish inexperience and folly, or to forcible means employed by their parents

desirous

volumes, and the apprehension of being betrayed by the transcribers, may be a principal cause that the reveries of particulars have not been diffused amongst numbers.

WHATEVER enthusiastic refinements, or religious whimsies, therefore, seize a Turk, they centre in himself, and serve at most as mere confidential entertainment to a few friends.

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THERE

desirous of easing an overburthened family ; or else to the intrigue and cajollery of some cunning monk. All this is evident to any unprejudiced man who has conversed with them in Turkey.

Were the apologies Reland mentions, ever published or promulged to Mahometans ? Did not the author of the *Mirror* transform himself into the *Polister* ? I dare affirm, if they were not the work of the same hand, they were of the same sect ; and that these Conferences were as unknown among Mahometans, as the authors of them are at present to us : and as there is not a missionary, or Christian, who dares now write, or speak to a Turk about religion ; so there never was in those times of still greater barbarism, any one who could have ventured to do either, without undergoing Lully's fate. Not a single instance can be produced of the conversion of a Mahometan to any other religion, since the commencement of the Hegira.

THERE is however, one sect in Turkey, principally at Salonica, of a very particular kind: it has sprung from one Sabati Sevi, a Jew of the last century, who pretended to inspiration and the Messiahship, and has many followers. They profess publickly the Mahometan religion, and retain privately the Jewish rites, much on the principle of the Ebionites, among the first Christians: they intermarry, inhabit together in the same part of the town, and never mix with Mahometans except on business and commerce, or in the mosches: they never frequent a synagogue, nor acknowledge their schism. It is difficult to conceive how they remain unnoticed by the Turks; or rather, it shews with how easy a composition the Turks are content in these matters. An outward profession of their own religion compensates for the private exercise of the other; though were these Jewish Mahometans publickly to profess both, they would be instantly made a publick example: death is the doom of an apostate.

WHATEVER other sects the Mahometans may have among them, they differ merely in words and metaphysical jargon; and, by what can be discovered, abound  
more

more among the *Sibiites*, or Persians, than among the *Sunites*, or orthodox Turks. Possibly, the clear, light Persian clime, or most exalted Persian language, is better adapted to produce transcendent flights of imagination, than the grosser Asiatick, or Thracian clime; or than the mixed Turkish dialect, compounded, perhaps, of the very dregs of the Persian and Arabian tongues.

It is impossible, we are told, to attain in any other language the immense sublimity of Persian poetry; and, indeed, as far as I could find, almost impossible for the best translator to convert it even into common sense: it seems therefore no wonder, since they abound with numberless poets, raised by the highest vein of enthusiasm, that the same spirit should lead them into extravagant, enthusiastic, unconfined flights about religion; and the rather, as they have not the heathen deities to play upon as the subject of their song.

BUT what is certain, there are among the Turks many philosophical minds. They have the whole systems of Aristotelian and Epicurean philosophy translated into their own language; and as they find the latter, which they call the Democratical, cuts more effectually at the root, and is more

THOSE who really act as divines are the *Imaums*, or parish-priests, who positively officiate in, and are set aside for, the mere service of the mosches. \* Their *Scheiks* are the chiefs of their *Dervishes*, or monks, and form religious communities, or orders, established on solemn vows: they consecrate themselves merely to religious offices, domestic devotion, and publick prayer and preaching: there are four of these orders, the *Bektasbi*, *Mevelevi*, *Kadri*, and *Seyab* †, who are very numerous throughout the empire.

No

\* The *Scheiks* frequently preach with virulence and invective against government; thence, or from the respect for religion, real or affected, they are mightily carested and revered by the greatest men in office: the vizirs have generally a favourite one about them, who often behaves with uncommon freedom and impudence.

† It may perhaps, be proper to insert some account of these four orders of Mahometan monks.

1. The *Bektasbi* were founded by one Hagi Bektash, whose sepulchre is now in a village called Besicktash, on the European side of the Bosphorus, near Galata; the Turks pay it great respect and veneration.

These



No church-revenues, as far as I could learn, are appropriated to the particular use

These monks, according to their institution, may marry. They are chiefly met with in country towns or villages, and are obliged to travel through the empire; they must give the *Gazel* and *Efma* to all the Mussulmen they meet, and to them only. The *Gazel* is an affecting tone of voice, which they apply in a special sense to the Divine love. The *Efma* is the invocation of one of the names of God, of which the Turks have among them one thousand and one.

2. The *Meveleoi* take their name from their founder Mevelana. These turn round in acts of devotion with such velocity for two or three hours successively, that not even a trace of their countenance is perceivable by a bystander. Music is their delight, particularly a flute made of an Indian reed; they live in their monastery, profess poverty and humility, appear exceeding modest and kind to strangers, receive all those of any religion who come to visit them, and accept alms. They treat strangers of any nation with coffee; and if a Mussulman's feet, or sandals, should be dirty, they offer immediately to wash them. They have a convent in Pera.

3. The *Kadri* are a singular order, whose institute and devotion consists in macerating their bodies; their looks are distracted and irregular; they walk the streets almost naked, rarely covering

use of the *Moulabs*: the *Imaums* are the ecclesiastics in immediate pay.

## MECCA

covering the thighs; they hold their hands joined together, as if at prayer, except when they dance, which religious exercise they will continue many hours, and sometimes the whole day, repeating incessantly with uncommon vehemence, *Hu! Hu! Hu! Hu!* one of their names of the Deity, until at last, as if they were in violent rage or phrensy, they fall to the ground foaming at the mouth, and bathed with sweat from every part of the body. This order was once abolished, but is since revived. They have a convent between Pera and St. Demetry, and receive all those who go to see them.

4. The *Seyab* are like the Indian *Fakirs*, meer vagabonds; they have monasteries; but when once they are out of them, they seldom return. They obtain easily a leave of absence from their superior, on condition of sending a certain quantity of provisions or money to the convent. They are, indeed, insolent sturdy beggars, who will not be refused. When they enter a town or a village, either in the public praying or market-place; they stand up, and cry most vehemently, *Good God! send me a thousand dollars! or, a thousand measures of rice! &c.* The people then flock about them, giving alms; and when they find they have exhausted the charity of the place, they march on to another town, and repeat the same practice, until they have collected the sum imposed on them by the superior of their convent.

In

MECCA and Medina absorb large sums. The repairing and beautifying their mosques, supplying their lamps with oil, and furnishing numberless implements for their use; paying many lay dependants who attend that service; supporting the *Mechtz*, *Medresses*, or publick schools; the *Immarets*, or hospitals for the sick, incurable, or mad; are the other means by which the remainder of that vast and enormous income is expended.

Most writers on the Mahometan religion, extracting their knowledge from Arabian authors of the very early ages of the *Hegira*, have, I think, too positively blended and confounded it with their present law: not considering the changes which time produced in the Mahommedan system;

In general, these itinerant monks are a set of determined villains and thieves, have influence only on the low superstitious part of the vulgar, on which consideration chiefly, it should seem, they are countenanced by the Turks of fashion, who, though they think them no essential part of the Mahometan institute, caress and encourage the superiors of this order, or such amongst them whose pretension to more eminent sanctity has gained an ascendance over the minds of the common people.

system; for the *Koran* containing political institutes as well as religious dogmas, was probably sufficient to regulate the civil affairs of Mahommed's first followers, a few Arabians, as remarkable for their poverty and the simplicity of their manners, as for their courage and enthusiasm; and the immediate successors of these men, possessed with a religious veneration for this production of their prophet, continued to blend together in the same person, the functions of the priest and that of the judge; and thus perplexed for a time religious with civil rights.

BUT when his followers became numerous, and their dominion was spread over many opulent and extensive regions, not only religious orders sprung up, to ease the Hierarch of what he thought the drudgery of his office; but also law-digesters arose, who now finding the doctrines of the *Koran* insufficient for the great end of government, viz. the preserving of good order, and the well-being of civil society, have remedied its defects without appearing to derogate from its authority, or risking to alienate the least part of that implicit obedience, and profound veneration, the people paid to it; for under pretence of forming commentaries, as a simple  
extension

extension of the angel's or the prophet's ideas, they have provided codes of civil law, equal and similar to the code, pandect, or digest; as clear and copious as *Cujas* and *Domat*.

ABOU HANIFE is one of the first and chief of those who have thus commented on the *Koran*: his books, and those of his disciples, are the rule of law under the Turkish government in Europe and Asia.

IN this manner the original institutes were augmented, so far as related to civil and criminal cases; indeed it certainly must have been necessary to form new regulations, when conquest, riches, and luxury, had introduced new crimes, and new subjects of contention. And thus, it should seem, the ecclesiastical and the civil first became, in some measure, distinct and separate departments; the *Moulabs*, *Mufti's*, &c. presiding in the courts of justice, and the *Imaums*, &c. officiating in the mosques; though still the exact boundaries of each jurisdiction are hardly to be defined.

THE ingenious president Montesquieu \*, led by precarious authorities, has excluded  
all

\* L'Esprit des Lois, lib. v. cap. xiv. & xv.

all right to the possession of private property; all right to successions; all inheritances in families, or to females and wives; and, indeed, all \* civil law from among the Turks. In short, he seems to think, that the Grand Seignor's despotism swallows up the whole code of right in that empire.

WHEN I see the excellent reasoning, and the many judicious consequences deduced from such erroneous principles, by so acute and penetrating a genius; I cannot help thinking it a serious instance, how subject we are to error, and how fallacious the most plausible arguments may sometimes prove.

WITHOUT appealing to fact, the single chapter intitled † *Women*, would have shewn him how successions in families, and to male, or female, or wives, are fixed and regulated by the prophet; and consequently, how far private property is secured by law beyond the reach, and out of the power, of the sultan.

THE other part required but a single enquiry; he might easily have been informed

\* L'Esprit des Lois, lib. vi. c. 1.

† Chap. IV. in Sale's Edition.

formed by what method they actually determine causes in their courts of justice, and what \* books they use in Turkey as authorities

\* *Extract out of a Law-Book used in the Turkish Courts, written by Hafne. [Chap. of Sales.]*

Sales are made when the one consents and the other accepts, explaining himself by the preterit of the Indicative Mood ; now when any one of the contracting parties consents to sell, or to buy, the other shall be at liberty to accept or not, as long as they remain in the place where the bargain is to be made.

But if the one consents, and the other goes out from that place before accepting, the bargain is void.

The sale is concluded when both positively agree ; then neither the one nor the other can be off, except some fault or defect should be found in the thing sold, or that the buyer had not seen it.

It is not necessary to know the quantity of goods exposed to sale, in order to bargain for the whole ; for though a price is specified, the sale is not valid until the quantity and quality are known.

Sales may be for ready money, or on credit, fixing the time of payment ; and when the species in which the goods are to be paid for is not specified, it is to be understood the most current money of the country ; but if there are different

authorities for their legal decisions: he would have found several, which formally stipulate,

rent species of current-money, the sale is not valid without fixing the particular specie.

All eatables may be sold, and all sorts of grain by the established *measure*, or without it; either by taking a vase or tub of any kind, the exact contents of which are unknown; or by weight, taking a stone for a weight, the real weight of which is unknown.

Selling a quantity of any eatables at a drachm the *Cafiz*, the sale shall be valid for one *Cafiz*, according to the opinion of Abu Hafne: but when the feller declares how many *Cafiz* there are, or may be, then according to his two disciples the whole is sold.

He that sells a flock of sheep, at a drachm a sheep, the sale will not hold for the whole flock.

In like manner for a piece of stuff, or silk, at a drachm the ell, he must mention the number of sheep or ells.

If a quantity of eatables of a hundred *Cafiz* are sold at a hundred drachms, and there are found less; the buyer will be at liberty to take them in paying only for what there is, or he may refuse the whole: but if there are more than an hundred measures, or *Cafiz*, he must restore the surplus to the feller.

But he that buys a piece of stuff, or silk, on the footing of ten ells at ten drachms, or, one hundred cubits of land at a hundred drachms; if less is found, he is at liberty to take them for  
the



stipulate, and fix, the terms and legality of a purchase, whether of lands, houses, corn,

the said sum, or to leave them; if there are more than what is agreed for, they belong to him, and the seller has no right to the surplus. —But if the seller declares that the land contains a hundred cubits, and that the price is a hundred drachms, or a drachm the cubit; in that case, if there are more or less, the buyer is at liberty to take it at a drachm the cubit, or to leave it.

If a bale of silks or stuffs, said to contain fifty pieces, is sold at fifty aspers, or at one asper the piece, and that there should be found fewer pieces; the buyer may take what the bale contains at an asper the piece, or he may refuse the whole; but if there are more than fifty pieces, the bargain is void.

When a house is sold, all the buildings belonging to it are included in the bargain, though not expressly mentioned; or on the sale of a piece of ground, the palm, or other trees standing in it shall be included, tho' not mentioned; but the herbs, or other greens growing in it are not comprehended.

If the palm, or other trees are sold with the fruit on them, the fruit will belong to the seller, unless they are specified in the bargain; but then the buyer can oblige him to gather the fruit immediately.

If fruit is sold on the tree, whether it proves good or bad, the bargain is valid, and the buyer must gather them immediately.

corn, cattle, or merchandize. From these it may be presumed, he would have acquired a notion of Turkish despotism very different from that which he has adopted.

THE *Moulabs*, however, whether considered as churchmen or lawyers, enjoy great immunities, which descend uninterruptedly to their families. Their lives and estates are generally secure; their greatest punishment in office, even for malversation, is exile; and if they are not too obnoxious to government, they may sometimes compound for that by a pecuniary donation. All the profitable employments of the law are in their hands; they are sent out as *Mufti's*, or judges, throughout the chief towns of the empire, whence they are promoted to the high office of *Cadilesquire*, or chief justice, either of *Romelia*, or of *Anatolia*; that is, of Europe, or of Asia; and at last to that of *Sheik Islam*, or *Mufti*, at Constantinople.

# CHAP. V.

## *Of the Koran.*

**I** SHALL not pretend to enter into a minute analysis of the several doctrines of the *Koran*, but confine myself to some general observations.

MR. SALE has given us an elaborate detail of that book, in the preliminary discourse to his excellent translation. I am, however, sorry to say, that he frequently discovers an inclination to apologize for it; and rather endeavours to reconcile and palliate the numerous absurdities he meets with, than to expose them in the light they deserve. One advantage, however, we derive from this humour of his, we may be certain he has not added an absurdity to those he found, nor given any of them a more ridiculous dress than they wear in the original.

SOME heterodox manufacturers of wit, desirous of appearing singular, though at the expence of common sense, if not of common honesty, have not scrupled to  
profess

profess themselves admirers of the *Koran*, have extolled its doctrines, and dared even to put them on a parallel with those established by our sacred writings.

MAHOMET, superior to his countrymen in parts and science, resolved to be supreme in command. To effect this he had but one game to play, which was to impose himself on them as a prophet divinely inspired, and his book as an immediate revelation from the Almighty. In this he could inculcate what doctrines, and assign himself what pre-eminence and authority he pleased: in short, his book was of the utmost consequence to him. He therefore, very artfully, took for its prototype, truth itself—the Mosaic and Christian revelations; for in his travels to Egypt, as well as at home among the Christians and Jews in Arabia, fugitives on account of religion, he must have observed the force with which these genuine revelations had captivated the minds of men; he therefore, without impugning either, declares the latter of them to be only a continuation of the former, and that his own is a continuation of both, and compleats the whole dispensation of Divine Providence. This he has judiciously seasoned with what he knew would render it most acceptable to his countrymen,

men, and appears most predominant in himself, the indulgence of their lust and rapine in this world, and a most sensual paradise in the next.

His first step was to persuade his ignorant Arabians, that the *Koran* is an extract taken from the great book, in which, at the creation of the world, the Divine decrees were all written and deposited at the same time in one of the sub-firmamental heavens: and that, from thence it was faithfully delivered to him, verse by verse, by the chief hierarchical angel Gabriel. Hence, in his chapter *Al Kadr*, he tells them himself, from the mouth of the Almighty, “ Verily, we sent down the *Koran* “ in the night of *Al Kadr*; and what shall “ make thee understand how excellent the “ night of *Al Kadr* is? The night of *Al* “ *Kadr* is better than a thousand months: “ therein do the angels descend, and the “ spirit Gabriel also, by permission of their “ Lord, with his decrees concerning every “ matter. It is peace until the visiting of “ the morn\*.”

ON this passage principally, is founded the claim of the *Koran* to be of celestial origin

\* Sale's Edit. Of Divine Decrees, ch. xcvi.

origin, the all-beauteous and all-perfect work of the Creator; and hence that most profound veneration, amounting almost to adoration, which the Mahometans pay to it. They fancy a chapter or verse can cure them of all diseases, preserve them from all accidents, or external evils; can prolong life, and render it healthful and prosperous. A thorough ablution is necessary before they presume to touch this sacred book; the sight of an infidel pollutes it; and when they read they must hold it above their middle, to preserve it from approaching the region of impurity and defilement.

THE Turks are eternally puzzled when, or which night, this *Al Kadr* may be: they think it must be in *Ramadan*; and many enthusiasts have, at that time, extatic communications with the angelic spirits who descended from the heavenly spheres.

MAHOMET, though so absolute and so able an impostor, did not, however, dare pretend to that great criterion of Divine truth, miracles, the main basis of those true revelations he would endeavour to imitate, and which he confesses to have been wrought \* in attestation of their Divine

\* Sal. Edit. ch. v. 27.

vine origin. Many urged him to produce them ; many asked of him signs ; and he seems in many parts of the *Koran*, more embarrassed to evade the charge of impostor, incurred by not manifesting his vocation by these signs, than to establish his doctrines. His own uncle and relations seemed, on that account, to detest his imposition ; and it is evident from the text, that he had often found his very women rebellious ; it is probable they likewise expected miracles : for he tells us, there were only four of them good and obedient.

WHEN he is pressed for this proof of his mission, he shifts the want of it on the will of the Deity ; “ \* They (the Infidels) have sworn, says he, by God, by the most solemn oath, that if a sign come unto them they would certainly believe therein : verily, signs are in the power of God alone, and he permitteth you not to understand, that when they come, they (the Infidels) will not believe ; and we will turn aside their hearts and their sight from the truth, as they believed not therein the first time ; and we will leave them to wander in their error.”

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\* Ch. vi. entitled Cattle, p. 110. Sal. Edit.

He then recommends them to believe implicitly in the *Koran*.

On another occasion he uses the same dexterity. “ \* The infidels say, unless a  
“ sign be sent down unto him (to Mahomet) from his Lord, we will not believe.  
“ The Lord’s answer; Thou art commissioned to be a preacher only, and not a  
“ worker of miracles; and unto every people hath a director been appointed. God  
“ knoweth what every female beareth in  
“ her womb, and what the wombs want  
“ or exceed of their due time or number  
“ of young.” The conclusion of this paragraph is curious; it is a short turn, upon wombs, which leaves the beginning upon miracles quite out of sight.

By these quotations we may perceive what evidence his external signs of Divine mission carried with them; and as to the internal, they are so far from recommending it, that the most of his doctrines and precepts, those properly his own, are trivial and unworthy the slightest attention. The precepts and commands copied from the Mosaic dispensation, of which there are many, or those from the Christian, may command some regard; altho’ those  
from

\* Ch. xiii. entit. Thunder, p. 201.



from the latter favour of the corrupt channel they have passed through; for if he preaches the duties of benevolence, and the forgiveness of injuries, it is not with that universal, beneficent, diffused principle, recommended in the gospels indiscriminately to all mankind: he confines these virtues undoubtedly to the narrow limits of his own sect; for they are neither to live nor commune with unbelievers; and so far from being enjoined to forgive them, they are commanded to injure and to subdue them: and God knows, it is but too evidently shewn by their practice how much they honour the precept.

It is, indeed, a pleasant part of the *Koran*, which represents the Divine communications descending so low as to regulate the minuter interests, family concerns, and amorous passions of Mahomet; it must give us a pretty just notion both of the prophet and his people, as well as of those sceptics who have expressed so favourable an opinion of his book: for instance, let us hear the awful commands of the Almighty imposed on the prophet's rebellious wives, &c. on so important an occasion as the vexatious demand they made for fine clothes: to satisfy this demand was a difficulty,

perhaps, too arduous for the power of man alone to overcome.

“ \* O PROPHET, say unto thy wives,  
 “ If ye seek the present life and the *pomp*  
 “ *thereof*, come, I will make a handsome  
 “ provision for you, and I will dismiss you  
 “ with an honourable dismissal; but if  
 “ you seek God, and his apostle, and the  
 “ life to come, verily, God hath prepared  
 “ for such of you as work righteousness a  
 “ great reward. O wives of the prophet,  
 “ whosoever of you shall commit a mani-  
 “ fest wickedness, the punishment thereof  
 “ shall be doubled unto her two-fold; and  
 “ this is easy with God: but whosoever of  
 “ you shall be obedient unto God and his  
 “ apostle, and shall do what is right, he  
 “ will give her her reward twice, and we  
 “ have prepared for her an honourable pro-  
 “ vision in *Paradise*. O wives of the Pro-  
 “ phet, ye are not as other women; if ye  
 “ fear God, be not too complaisant in  
 “ speech, lest he should covet, in whose  
 “ heart is a disease of incontinence.—Sit  
 “ still in your houses, and set not your-  
 “ selves forth with the ostentation of the  
 “ former time of ignorance. Observe the  
 “ appointed time of prayer, give alms—  
 “ and

“ and obey God and his apostle ; for God  
 “ desireth only to remove from you the  
 “ abominations of vanity, &c.”

TERMAGANT and rebellious wives were the least punishment that a man of the prophet's insatiable passion deserved ; instead of four, a number he allowed his followers, and surely sufficient to break the ease, and destroy the happiness of any one man living, he again brings down the Deity to grant him a permission without limitation, and even to direct his amours. If he had been smothered under them all, it would have been a just death for such extravagant lubricity. *Satia te sanguine*, was the saying of the Scythian queen, when she plunged Cyrus's head into a vessel of blood.—But let us hear again his Lord.

“ \* O PROPHE T, we have allowed thee  
 “ thy wives, unto whom thou hast given  
 “ their dower ; and also the slaves which  
 “ thy right-hand possesseth, of the booty  
 “ which God hath granted thee ; and the  
 “ daughters of thy uncle, and the daughters  
 “ of thy aunts, both on thy father's  
 “ side and on thy mother's side, who have  
 “ fled with thee from *Mecca* ; and any  
 “ other

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\* Koran, ch. xxxiii. Sal. Edit. p. 348, 349.

“ other believing woman if she give herself  
 “ unto the prophet, in case the prophet  
 “ desireth to take her to wife. This is a  
 “ peculiar privilege *granted* unto thee  
 “ above the rest of the true believers: we  
 “ know what we have ordained them con-  
 “ cerning their wives, and the slaves whom  
 “ their right-hands possess, lest it should  
 “ be deemed a crime in thee *to make use of*  
 “ *the privilege granted thee*; for God is  
 “ gracious and merciful. Thou mayst  
 “ postpone the *turn of such of thy wives as*  
 “ *thou shalt please*, in being called to thy bed;  
 “ and thou mayst take unto thee her whom  
 “ thou shalt please, and her whom thou  
 “ shalt desire, of those whom thou shalt  
 “ have before rejected, and it shall be  
 “ no crime in thee: this will be more  
 “ easy, that they *may be entirely content*,  
 “ and may not be grieved, but may be  
 “ well pleased with what thou shalt give  
 “ every one of them.—O true believers,  
 “ enter not the house of the prophet, un-  
 “ less it be permitted you to eat meat with  
 “ him, without waiting his convenient  
 “ time.—And when ye ask of the pro-  
 “ phet’s wives what ye may have occasion  
 “ for, ask *it* of them from behind a cur-  
 “ tain; this will be more pure for your  
 “ hearts and their hearts. Neither is it fit  
 “ for you to give any uneasiness to the  
 “ apostle

“ apostle of God, or to marry his wives  
 “ after him for ever; for this would be a  
 “ grievous thing in the sight of God.”

MAHOMET's paradise flowing with delicious waters, planted with the most odoriferous trees and shrubs; but above all, the exalted enjoyment of black-eyed nymphs, would lead me farther than I intend.

THE few quotations exhibited here, merely to save a reader the trouble of recurring to the *Koran* itself, may sufficiently evince what marks of sanctity, and of a divine mission, we must expect from it: they will likewise demonstrate, what a most abject idea the prophet, and his ignorant followers, must have had of the Divine perfections; and what gross contradictions passages like these must be, to those pompous and sublime descriptions of them, with which they are most impiously mixt. I shall follow Mahomet no farther in his lubricity, but say with the prophet Habakkuk, “ he that runs may read.”

I MUST however observe, that some of his laws, if not rigidly just, are yet an effectual security against despotism, and the oppression of the people, especially such as

relate to private property, widows, orphans, inheritances, legacies, and crimes, &c.

ONE conclusion I think so clear, that it must be evident to all sagacious and impartial men; it is, that the whole *Koran* is a discordant, incoherent jumble of sentences, gleaned from fugitive Jews and Christian sectaries, Nestorians, Monothelites and Eutychians; strangely put together by the prophet, and imposed on ignorant enthusiastic people, who must have been great barbarians when they believed it the word of God.

WE possess many good translations of this extraordinary book, made from genuine and standard originals: excellent ones were found among the Granadine Moors by cardinal Ximenes, and correct copies may always be purchased in Turkey; tho' at a high rate. Indeed, there is scarce a risque or possibility of being imposed on; for the Mahometans hold it as the highest sacrilege to alter a single point or jota of this their sacred book: and most men of letters amongst them, like the Jews in Palestine, think it not only a duty, but a special recommendation to the Deity and his prophet, to have every word and tittle of the *Koran* so fixed and imprinted in their memories,

memories, that they may on any occasion repeat it extempore.

DU RYER'S French version may err in the idiom, but the general doctrines are sufficiently exact; Marracci's Latin one is very correct; and that in English by Mr. Sale, is undoubtedly, in every respect, of approved accuracy.

TALKING on this subject with a learned *Effendi*, who was known to have the *Koran* by heart; a chapter from Sale's edition was explained to him in the vulgar Turkish dialect: the old Turk, in a sort of rapturous surprise, followed the interpreter; repeating verse by verse in the original Arabian. He remained astonished and amazed; and asked with some emotion, how we could have so perfect a translation, the sense so justly preserved? and added, that the author must have been an admirable proficient in the Arabian language, a very great man.

I CANNOT conclude this chapter without observing, that from what I have said of the practical religion of the Mahometans, we are not to infer that they are universally, and without exception, destitute of virtue; nor of all humanity towards

strangers. I have already, in my general character of the Turks, anticipated this remark as far as I could consistent with truth. I could not help, however, repeating it, bad as they are, they are the best people in their empire.

THAT corrupt religion perverts the rectitude of nature, that the Turks are notoriously corrupted by it, is too true; but how many ignorant absurd sects of Christians are there, who, each deviating from the original institutes and pure precepts of Christianity, are strangers to that perfect simplicity and universal benevolence it requires; and are as destitute of social virtue and common humanity towards those who differ from them in opinion, as the most zealous or ignorant Turk?



## C H A P. VI.

*Of Despotism, and its Restraints.*

**M**EN, either from habit and the prejudices of education, or from presumption and opinion, are apt to think their own government the best; to censure others, point out their defects, and frequently, without sufficient knowledge to judge, will venture to revile and abuse them.

THE government of the Turkish empire has been injuriously misrepresented by censurers of this kind. The tremendous accounts given of its despotism have misled many, and raised the religious passions of some to abhorrence and utter detestation; while others, not under the influence of religious passions, have found their nature shocked at the image these accounts conveyed to them: and well regulated as the system of this haughty court may be, both have been brought to annex the idea of barbarism to it; have supposed it without order or plan, entirely subject to the caprice, cruelty, and avarice of a tyrant,

tending merely to the oppression of his subjects, and, as far as its power extended, to the destruction of mankind.

**SURELY** these men did not, or would not, look nearer home: it was, perhaps, too near; for let us only cast our eyes about us, and impartially examine the governments with which we are surrounded, we may then perhaps find, that the Sultan is not more despotic than many Christian sovereigns; perhaps, not so much as some of them.

**ALTHOUGH** it is absurd to look for perfection in any body of laws, or any political institutions; since the productions of the human mind, limited as it is, must all be imperfect; yet the most equitable conclusion will be, that in every empire which has extended wide, and flourished long, there are some parts of its constitution wise and good: and it is certain, that whatever defects may be in the political system of the Turks, their empire is so solidly founded on the basis of religion, combined with law, and so firmly cemented by general enthusiasm, and the interest, as well as vanity, of the Turkish individual, that it has lasted ages, and bids fair for stability and permanency.

**WE**

WE have seen in a former chapter, that the Turks have laws to secure property and regulate commerce; they have others to punish crimes and restrain vice. It is not their laws, but the corrupt administration of them, the flagitious venality of their judges, and the number of false witnesses connived at, and whose testimony is accepted, that is the opprobrium of the Turkish empire, as will be more fully shewn in a succeeding chapter.

How far Mahomet intended to limit, or extend the power of the sovereign, I shall not pretend to determine; the degree in which the present sultans are absolute, is an enquiry more to the purpose. Of this, facts will best enable us to judge: those we shall produce will shew us the nature of the Turkish monarch's despotism; and that, independent of fear, the constant companion and restraint of tyrants, he is limited by religion and law. But we shall first consider the right of his claim to inherit the possessions of some of his subjects.

THOSE who are directly employed in his service, and those less immediately so; for example, the officers under *Paschaws* in distant provinces, know that they hold  
their

their offices on a kind of feudal tenure : they, notwithstanding, eagerly solicit, and contentedly accept them on that condition; submitting, or, it may be said, covenanting and agreeing, that he should inherit at their death.

THE affinity of this law or custom with the tenures of the old feudal law, transferred, in this instance, from lands to office, would lead us to think it had its origin from those tenures; for they prevailed over almost all the known world, at the time the *Koran* was formed; and they subsisted amongst ourselves long after the Conquest.

By these tenures, lands held in fief reverted, on the death of the holder, absolutely and irrevocably to the feudal prince or lord: the family were left to scramble the wide world for subsistence; they had no claim of recovery, nor even a pretension to relief in their necessities, except from mere commiseration and humanity.

MAHOMET, either by chance or design, has effectually secured the people from the immediate inconvenience and oppression of that tenure.

ESTATES, in land or houses, annexed to the church, either in actual possession, or in reversion, are held both by prince and people sacred and inviolable: those persons therefore, by whatever means they acquire their possessions, who give the reversion to religious foundations, transmit them unmolestedly and unalienably to their direct male issue: Mecca and Medina are the places generally preferred, because held the most sacred.

THEY call this settlement *Vacuf*: they pay an annual, very trifling, quit-rent, until the extinction of that issue, when the whole devolves to the religious foundation on which it is settled.

THIS previous law, or tie of religion, binds the prince to so rigid an observance, that there has never been a single example of even an attempt to trespass or reverse it.

FOR, independent of what he may conceive his duty towards God, or his prophet, the least breach of such a law destroys the very foundation of his throne: it is merely by the *Koran*, or their religious institutes, his sovereignty exists; the moment

ment he abandons those doctrines, or violates those laws, he becomes an infidel, and ceases to be the lawful sovereign.

MAHOMET has not limited this law of security merely to his own sectaries; it extends to all religions. Christians or Jews may avail themselves of it; and as most of them, led by ambition or interest, aspire to enjoy more or less the countenance and favour of the great officers in government, they generally take the advantage of that protection to settle their possessions either with Mecca or Medina; or, perhaps, with greater facility, some one of the several mosques at Constantinople, or wherever else their fancy or connexions may lead them; it is enough that it be a religious foundation.

THE Jews, indeed, have been excluded from some mosques, as it appeared by the registers, that in the space of a hundred years, not a single reversion fell in; whence the Turks, it should seem, have concluded, that the direct male issue of the sons of Abraham is eternal.

FROM what has been said of the *Vacif*, it is obvious, and it is worth observing, what immense revenues belong to the church;

church; and how in succession of time it must swallow up into its enormous bosom, almost all the lands and possessions of that vast empire.

C H A P.

## C H A P. VII.

*Facts to elucidate the foregoing chapter, and of the Turkish government.*

**T**HE Grand Seignor is considered as absolute sovereign of the whole Turkish empire; the subjects approaching him treat him as a divinity, with the highest veneration and respect. He should, strictly adhering to their constitution, delegate his absolute power to the Vizir. This was practised by most of them from Mahomet the 11<sup>d</sup>'s time to 1730.

THE rebellion that year, the deposition of sultan Achmet, and the accession of his nephew Machmut, gave a new turn to the constitution. There was, at that time, in the seraglio, where he generally acts as first minister, a *Kislar-Aga*, or chief of the black eunuchs, an experienced and wise man: he had been in office under Machmut's father, predecessor to the deposed Achmet; he had seen two rebellions, two depositions of the sovereign, observed the cause, traced the evil, and pointed out the remedy.

THE



THE cause he ascribed to the permanent continuance and absolute power of the Vizirs; to their ambition of glory, and restless disposition for war and conquest. He therefore counselled the new Sultan to retain the power in his own hands; to change his Vizirs frequently, not suffering any one to continue in office above three years, and to live in peace with all his neighbours. On these maxims he advised his master to establish the tranquillity of government, and the security of the throne; and sultan Machmut, during a reign of twenty-four years, steadily adhered to them.

THIS black eunuch lived to the age of ninety; he died in 1746, and was succeeded by his favourite *Bekir-Aga*, a young Black, about thirty-three years of age, born in the island of Borneo. Full of spirit and vigour, he found himself, by the policy of his late master, in possession of absolute power, and hastened to exert it; but he wanted the wisdom, the judgment, the knowledge of mankind, and experience his predecessor possessed; his will became his law, and he set no bounds to his avarice.

INTOXICATED

INTOXICATED with higher ideas than his understanding could support, he laid down as a maxim, That no man in the empire should be worth above 10,000 \* dollars, and acted as if he would not leave them an asper.

THE rage of his passion was for diamonds, jewel-work, and rich toys; probably, indeed, to lay in a stock of portable wealth for an evil day, and to live in splendor at Cairo, the usual place of their exile. During the six years of his administration, one would have thought that he intended to exhaust all Europe of diamonds, and purchase the whole produce of the mines of Golconda and Brazil.

THE instruments of his extortion were, a young slave of twenty-two or twenty-three years old, and an Armenian raised from the dust. The government of that vast empire centered in the hands of this junto. When any large purchase of diamonds was to be made, the means were concerted between these three how to raise the money: they sagaciously divided the necessary

\* A dollar makes 120 aspers, and is worth two shillings and six-pence.

cessary sum into parts; they then applied to a number of opulent great men, who were, or had been in office; and giving them to understand it was to purchase presents intended for the sovereign, they assigned a part on each until they had compleated the whole sum. No one dared repine, nor even hesitate; some were silent through fear; others, perhaps, most of them, from the expectation of future favours.

THIS rapine was variously talked of; some ascribed it to the prince, some to the Black and his associates; the more general voice gave it to the former, who certainly could not be entirely ignorant of the extortions practised by his minister. They occasioned, however, no commotions or disturbances.

HIGHLY in the sultan's confidence and favour, he might, indeed, have gone on with these and other irregularities without controul; but his first successes spirited him on to enormous acts of power against all decency, law, and religion; he not only meddled with those dependent, but even with independent people. He injudiciously offended the body of Janissaries, by stopping the pay of some, and withholding the money which had been promised them  
for

for rebuilding their *Odda's*, or chambers, lately burned down ; and at last, he struck against those whom he had feared most, the men of the law.

AN important cause was depending before the *Moulab*, or judge of Scutari, a man of singular resolution. The party who was in the wrong applied to the Black and his creatures for protection, and backed their request with a large present. The junto undertook it, and sent a message to the judge, that he should decide the cause in favour of their friend : he answered, that he would pronounce according to law, and his own conscience ; and on various like sollicitations, he as constantly persisted in the same answer.

THE day he was on the bench to hear, and finally to determine the cause, a \* *Cbio-badar* of the Black's entered the court-room with precipitation, and heard the sentence pronounced against their friend. He abused and threatened the *Moulab*, drew out a short whip they generally wear, and some pretend, went so far as not only to shake and menace, but to strike.

THIS

\* Head-servant.

THIS unprecedented insult on law and religion, stirred up the *Moulab* to seek redress and revenge: he applied to the *Muf-ti*, who sent him to the Vizir. That minister sought, by all possible methods, to pacify him: every offer was rejected, even that of the *Moulalick* of Iconium, the best in the empire. The men of the law supported their brother, and murmured silently, but deeply. What heightened their indignation was, that whilst the Vizir capitulated with the *Moulab*, the Black rewarded his *Chjobadar* with a lucrative message abroad.

THE Black and his dependants perceived the storm arising; they found they could not silence the *Moulab*, and therefore determined his destruction. This could not be done openly; yet their Arabian craft, blinded by rage, passion, and despair, did not enable them to concert it with their usual diabolical subtlety, or to perpetrate their villainy with that secrecy the evil they exposed themselves to required.

THE bungling project they hit upon was to send ruffians in the dead of night, who strangled the *Moulab* and his daughter in their beds: in the mean time, they cut the wooden pillars supporting the house,  
and

and so demolished it, that it might appear as if they were accidentally buried under the ruins.

THE time, method, and circumstances, led to a clear discovery of all this horrid transaction. The men of the law became desperately resolved on vengeance, and joined secretly with some chiefs of the Janizaries; but determined to spare the sovereign, provided he gave up his Black, the obnoxious *Kislar-Aga*.

THE difficulty lay how to make their first grievances known to him: if through the black eunuch, the natural channel, any two or three complainants risked sudden destruction, without effecting what they desired; if secretly to the Sultan, they were not sure of a better fate. They found therefore, only one method which might effectually awaken, intimidate, and inform him; that was, by burning of Constantinople.

FIRES continued incessantly for near twenty days, every day in two or three different parts of that city. The Grand Signor finding the evil deep, and carried on by design, deposed the Vizir; a sacrifice he imagined would appease the rage of discontent:

discontent: but he found that expedient was insufficient: for the next day as many fires appeared. At the last he was advised, as it was said by some, to consult secretly the *Mufti*; or, as others report, that chief of the law went to him spontaneously, and boldly laid the whole iniquitous conduct of the Black before him, demanded justice, and told him, he exposed the security of his own throne in refusing it; urged the necessity of taking some immediate determined party against the Black; adding, if the Sultan would not give *Bechir* the *Kislar-Aga* up, he desired leave to resign his own office, that he might rather as a private man, see the dreaded catastrophe of his prince's fall, than, as the head of the law, be constrained to consent to it.

SURE it is, that the *Mufti* was really a man of that stoical self-denying turn, that heroic mind, as to dare hold such language, and undertake this rash and hazardous message to his sovereign, who immediately gave attention to this alarming remonstrance, determined to get rid of the Black, and to exile him to Cairo.

ON one of his usual days of recreation, the Sultan went by water to a *Chiosk*, or  
 E summer-

summer-house, on the Bosphorus: the \* *Bostangi-Pasbi*, and *Selimbatar-Aga*, who always accompany him, had already received his orders. The Black was of the party; they seized on him at his landing, forced him into a boat, and imprisoned him in Leander's tower †, where he was to wait for the galley designed to transport him to Cairo.

THE sight of the galley excited fresh remonstrances from the Law; they demanded the delinquent's blood, and obliged the Grand Seignor, though with the utmost reluctance, to consent to his execution.

THE high spirit of the Black was changed to desperation at the sight of the executioner; he resolutely defended himself with his *Hanjar*, or knife, against that officer: he wounded him; and fell at last but by the superiority of the scimitar: his body lay exposed three days on the sea-shore.

#### DAILY

\* The *Bostangi Pasba* always steers the Sultan's boat; he is the chief of the *Bostangees*, or gardeners, who, on occasion, form a considerable military corps. The *Selimbatar-Aga* is the Sultan's sword-bearer, and constantly attends him.

† Situated on an island, in the port of Constantinople.



DAILY executions followed of all his creatures and dependants; his slave, his Armenian, and his secretaries; many others were exiled.

THE sums confiscated by death and exile were immense. What passed through the *Tesierdarat*, or public treasury, and was afterwards paid into the Grand Seignor's *Chafne*, or private treasury, collected from without, amounted to 30,500 purses, or a million nine hundred thousand pounds sterling. What was found within the Seraglio in diamonds, jewel-work, and gold, was never known; but in general assured to be as much more, or far exceeding it.

THIS most rare and remarkable fact in their history, and which so immediately and intimately affected absolute power, might singly shew how law at last can effectually controul it, and bring the sovereign, as it was well known in this case, against every sentiment of love and affection, and almost without a precedent or example, to abandon the governor of his Seraglio, and at that time of his empire, to the utmost rigour of the justice of law.

BUT that even the Sultan thinks himself bound by law, is evident from his practice; for, on any treaty to be made, any war to be undertaken, or transgressions punished that are committed against himself, or by persons of high rank in his service; he applies to the *Mufsi* for his *Fetfa*, his decree, his decision, or sanction of law.

It is true as he makes the *Mufsi*, he can depose and exile him, the worst that can happen to him. It is also as true, that many of them, in different reigns, have actually withstood the will of their Sultan; and that, notwithstanding, he has not dared immediately to resent their non-compliance. On these occasions it has been judged necessary to invent some more plausible pretence for disgracing them: the argument against violent proceedings, would, in this case, be too clamorous with the people; those of the law alone might shake his throne.

THE *Koran*, we have observed, secures property; and the following remarkable instance will confirm the practice.

IN

IN the year 1755, the \* Porte was burnt entirely down: on rebuilding it the consideration was how to place it on the former spot, and at the same time render the situation secure from a like accident for the future.

THE method determined on, was, to leave a sufficient void space about it, and for that end to purchase and demolish several houses that were contiguous. Most owners submitted to a sale; but there was one old woman who declared she could not, and would not, part with hers; that it had been a property in her family for several generations, and no money could compensate the infinite value it was of to her: no offer tempted her, no threats could avail. The men in power cried out and abused her; but the injustice appeared too violent to dare take it by force; the house stood; and when it was asked why the Sultan did not use his authority? take it, and pay the value? the answer was, *'Tis impossible, it cannot be done, it is her property.*

\* The Porte is the palace in which the Vizir resides: in it all the archives are kept, and all public business transacted.

NOTWITHSTANDING the transcendent expressions the Turks use when speaking of their sovereign, they will frequently murmur, talk freely, abuse him and his ministers, throw anonymous scurrilous papers into the mosques, and seem ever ripe for rebellion, if outraged by frequent and unusual oppression and tyranny. They are taught that he is established by God, that he is a descendent of their prophet, thro' whose mediation they expect salvation; and yet in a moment they will deprive him of his throne, of his liberty, and even of his life.

THIS may appear only a single instance of the immense number of seeming contradictions in the composition of human nature; though, indeed, were it so, it might with other such instances be accounted for, by what a sagacious \* free writer has attempted to prove that men do not generally act according to principles.

ALTHOUGH I think his proposition too general, it is, I fear, in great part true; for that there are many men who do not act according to principle, is but too evident: this might therefore, in appearance, furnish

\* Bayle.

furnish a solution ; but here would be misapplied and insufficient ; for the whole of what Turks are taught relating to government, is not taken into the case ; and therefore the fact is not fairly represented.

For they learn very early, that if the prince is of right divine, he founds it on the *Koran* ; that he is constituted such by that sacred code of laws ; which as a true believer he has studied, and knew, before his accession to the throne, it would ever be his duty to observe ; and that, consequently, he is as much bound and tied by all those laws, as they themselves are.

THIS is so explicitly and fully laid down in the *Koran*, that Mahomet thought it necessary to throw in rules of exception expressly for himself.

HENCE when the people are notoriously aggrieved ; their property, or that of the church, repeatedly violated ; when the prince will riot in blood, or carry on an unsuccessful war ; they appeal to *Law* pronounce him an infidel, a tyrant, unjust, incapable to govern ; and, in consequence, depose and imprison, or destroy him.

THEY, it is true, consult first their own power, or the probability of success; rather than the rectitude of the action, but always under the sanction of the law, directed by some one of the legislature; and it may be affirmed, that no example will be found of the deposition of a Sultan in Turkey, but a form of law, either true or false, has been observed: nay, it seems absolutely necessary; for it has always been practised, that either the *Mufii*, or \* the *Nakih of Santa Sophia*, or of *Eiup*, or at least, some distinguished man of the law, should enter the Seraglio, or tent, and even declare the reasons of the deposition to the very Sultan; announcing to him why by law he is unworthy and incapable of reigning.

FEAR obliges the Turks to passive obedience, merely as disunited individuals: then they only talk;—but when once the burthen of ills accumulate and extend, they find a chief; the law and soldiery join with the people as in a common interest, and depose the oppressor; but always place on the throne his lawful successor.

THIS

\* Head, or director of the mosehees, who are emirs or descendents of Mahomet.

THIS single undoubted practice of taking the *lawful Successor* proves they seek the sanction of *law*; and I must observe what perhaps is undoubtedly true, wherever it has not been mere usurped temporary power, the like has been practised in all governments.

## C H A P. VIII.

*History of the Vizir Ragib Mehemet Pasbaw's government.*

**T**HE death of the chief Black gave a sudden change to the interior of the Turkish government, and may be considered as a new æra in their constitution. This circumstance, however, is little known, and less noticed: what therefore succeeded, and the advantages taken from that event by the Vizir, to establish his own absolute power, may be worth relating.

THE new *Kislar-Aga*, intimidated by the tragical end of his predecessor, conducted himself with great caution; he seemed to consult frequently with the Vizir, and enter into closer connexions with him: this continued until the year 1754.

IT was then that, on the demise of Sultan Machmut, his brother Osman ascended the throne. This prince, according to the maxims of Turkish policy, had been continually confined; and now came forth  
new



new into the world, at the age of fifty-six, a perfect stranger to mankind. On this event, the Black *Kislar-Aga* began to assume more power, and with his party, composed of some without and some within the Seraglio, to make and depose Vizirs as they pleased. His power within the Seraglio is entirely free from controul, except from his secretary the *Jazigi Effendi*, who generally gains credit with the Grand Signor: in these two, and a few of their adherents, the whole power of government centered.

ON the death of Osman, in the year 1757, the Vizir Ragib Mehemet Pasha, who had the seals, happened to be the ablest, and most subtle man of the Turkish empire. His office led him to place Sultan Mustapha on the throne: he had either formed a secret connexion with that prince before, or captivated his affection then, by his obsequiousness, learning, and eloquence, so that he became at once his friend and confidant, and set the office of Vizir on its ancient footing of absolute minister with absolute power.

THE Sultan, to attach this minister more effectually to his person, obliged him to repudiate an amiable young lady his wife.

and to marry the princess his sister; a widow; whose person, and advanced years, rendered her an object incapable of exciting the tender passions.

**MUSTAPHA**, the present Sultan, of whom we are now speaking, is a son of Achmet, who was deposed in 1730. The two brothers Machmut and Osman, who had reigned from the time of that deposition till the accession of Mustapha, were descendants of Achmet's brother.

**FILIAL** duty operates with great force on Mahometans; they commonly, I might say invariably, make a point of imitating their fathers; and quote the life and actions of their progenitors as the only models they ought to follow.

**THIS** prince, therefore, looked on all and every regulation introduced since his father's deposition, or which deviated from the practice of his ancestors, as insufferable innovations; and the reigns of his two cousins appeared to him full of abuses and irregularities.

**THE** Vizir took care to confirm him in these ideas, and to point out the abuses; exclaiming against them as deviations not  
only

only from the practice of his father, but from the ancient Mahometan rule or canon of government: he carried him up to the time of Solyman I. by some called the Magnificent, by them the Lawgiver; and did not fail to represent the power given to the *Kislar-Aga*, a wild, ignorant black slave, as the source of those and all other attendant evils; that the authority usurped within the Seraglio, and the iniquitous intrigues always forming there, destroyed the wisest measures of the Porte; and that the true original establishment of the empire, was the absolute power of the Vizir.

THE Black who succeeded *Bekir-Aga* still continued in power. On several occasions he had shewn himself no friend to the Vizir, who, nevertheless, had supported himself, during the few months he governed in Sultan Osman's reign, by means of the *Fazigi Effendi*; he found himself, however, continually tottering, and called himself publickly, a stranger who must prepare to remove. Turks never forgive: the Vizir's ability and art were therefore immediately employed to satisfy his revenge, by punishing this enemy. The Black was condemned to exile; and on the fatal disaster of the Mecca caravan, his head was struck off, and brought to Constantinople,

stantinople, as a compensation he owed to the people for being the original cause of that sacrilege.

THE power of ministers in this, as in many other countries, is in proportion to the emoluments of their office, and the consequent riches and number of their dependents.

THE *Harem*, or ladies of the Seraglio, have a vast revenue assigned them for their support and maintenance: this consists in large districts of lands, and considerable towns, in Europe and Asia, and is called the *Haremai*. The absolute independent government and direction of these revenues, which amount to those of a kingdom, were intirely in the disposition of the black *Kislar-Aga*. He received the whole, accountable to no one; in all affairs relating to the *Haremai*, he held the Divans, distributed justice; causes, criminal and civil, came before him; he named the governors, and all the other magistrates, civil and military; no one dared contradict him, or interfere with him in the government of those places allotted for the maintenance of the *Harem*.

THE difficulty was how to eradicate this part of the constitution; but Ragib Mehemet Pasha's resources never failed him: his knowledge of their history, his fertile genius and eloquence, had captivated the Grand Seignor, who was soon persuaded that this power of the Black Eunuch over the *Haremai*, was the source of his crimes; that government should be more simple; and that even the business of the *Haremai* should, as a principal and essential part, be annexed to the Vizir's office: in short, he got it intirely out of the hands of the Seraglio, and brought it into his own; substituting a Black of his own choice, whom he rendered subservient to all his views; so that one might truly say, he re-modelled that part of government, and brought the whole empire under his own absolute power.

I COULD not help often comparing this Vizir's art of governing, with that of Tiberius. In cunning, deceit, and jealousy, he exceeded him; and where he found a competitor, or one who might endanger his own security, his cruelty perhaps was not less.

A **TEFTERDAR**, or high-treasurer, a man of unbounded generosity, and uncommon sublimity of sentiment, occupied that post for the second time while Ragib was Vizir, and had gained vast popularity. The Vizir heard him continually praised: this was a sufficient reason to excite his jealousy. He ordered a revision of accounts; found him, as he pretended, deficient; and procured his exile; at the same time complaining of the loss he sustained by the *Tefterdar's* removal. Nor did the Vizir's hatred stop here; it followed him in his exile, and was not appeased but by his blood: he had his head cut off, protesting all the while against such cruel justice, crying and lamenting as for his friend's hard fate; censuring the Grand Signor's rigour and too inflexible severity, exercised on so able and amiable a man, for a crime so common, and for which an atonement was so easily made.

WITH all his credit and power, he never in the least attempted to contest the Grand Signor's will. Subservient to it, he advanced to the high and important post of *Mufti*, one *Veli Effendi*, a bold loquacious man, much respected in the law. This man was not long in his post, before he was observed

observed to meddle in politics, and was thought to vie in power with the Vizir.

THE Vizir, who had taken an affection to the interpreter of the Porte, resolved to make a change of princes, or *Vaywodes*, in Moldavia and Walachia; and to confer one of those dignities on the interpreter. The Sultan agreed to it; the interpreter was nominated to this promotion; and the honours to be conferred on him on that occasion were prepared: but the *Mufii*, who patronized another, a deposed prince, came between, and mentioned him to the Grand Seignor as the properest person; heightening his commendation with uncommon praises.

THE Sultan mentioned this recommendation to the Vizir; that minister immediately confirmed it, and submitted to alter his whole plan.

THE interpreter was laid aside, and the *Mufii* had the satisfaction to find his recommendation effectual.

THE Vizir's usual Turkish Proverb was, that "you must hunt the hare in a cart:" that is, Do your business covertly, and avoid precipitation. He received the new  
rince

prince as if this promotion was his own act, and the new prince his own creature : all went on, seemingly, in perfect harmony with the *Mufti*, for near three months. At length a rumour was industriously spread round the town, as if the *Mufti* had taken one hundred purses of money for his recommendation ; but if this did not reach the Grand Seigneur, it failed in its intended effect : the point was how to convey it to him.

THIS prince, as is customary in Turkey, frequently went about incognito, disguised as a common man ; and introduced himself into coffee-houses to hear what the people said of himself and his ministers.

It was to one of those houses in \* *Eiup*, that he more particularly resorted : here the Vizir set some of his people, and instructed them in the language, which, on the Sultan's entrance, they should hold in his hearing. One of them began with saying, " they were blest with the wisest, justest, and best of princes, and wished that his ministers resembled him ; but what could they hope, when the chief of their religion and law was so venal and infamous as to be corrupted by infidels ?  
that

\* A suburb near his summer-palace.



that the *Mufti* had received a hundred purfes of money to raife a miserable infidel to the dignity of prince of Walachia; and if fuch abominations were fuffered, and that the Grand Seignor fhould not be informed of them, the empire would foon fall into ruin and deftruction." The whole company joined in the accusation: the Grand Seignor alarmed, flipt out, went to the Vizir, and ordered him to depofe the *Mufti* immediately.

THE Vizir expoftulated; he told his majefty, that fuch reports fhould be received with diffidence; that people were often mifinformed, and always difpofed to be cenforious and impertinent; that this report was certainly not to be trusted; that the *Mufti* was too holy, too virtuous a man to be guilty of fuch wickednefs; and conjured him, at leaft, to fufpend his indignation until he could more truly and precifely verify the fact.

HIS exhortations and intreaties pacified the monarch for the prefent, until the fubtle minifter pofted a new group in another coffee-houfe, to repeat the accusation, with additional aggravations againft the *Mufti*. The firft was then confirmed beyond a doubt; the prince would no longer fuffer a delay,

delay, but ordered the *Mufti* into immediate banishment, to a most disagreeable situation at Synope on the Black Sea.

THE Vizir appeared to all his friends under the utmost concern at this event. The *Mufti* applied to him with most fervent entreaties, to have the place of banishment changed, and that his departure might not be so instantaneous: the minister represented the difficulty of prevailing with an irritated, passionate, just prince. However, he promised to use all his interest to mitigate the sentence, and that he would, as effectually as possible, implore his majesty's clemency.

HE suffered the *Mufti* to remain a day or two at a country-house on the Bosphorus; and afterwards obtained for him, what this disgraced man and his friends so ardently desired, the place of his banishment to be changed from Synope to Brusia.

THUS after giving him a fatal blow, he yet reserved to himself the merit of having most essentially served him.

## C H A P. IX.

*Change of Vizirs. — Order of Business. —  
Policy of Turkish Ministers.*

**T**HE change of Vizirs, and sometimes, though rarely, their execution, has brought on a general prejudice, and been produced as an argument of the instability and disorder of the Turkish government: Sultan Machmut, as I have observed, introduced that change as a maxim of state, and was the first who methodically practised it.

SOME who were of the very lowest class of men, several of whom could not write or read, have occupied that high office; yet the order of government, and the clue of business, has not been a moment interrupted. Another maxim more certain and salutary preserves government in its equal regular course; for subalterns in office are religiously continued, and generally on changes advanced: so that those who are  
many

many years trained and practised in the business, become the Vizir's amanuenses and instructors. Hence, any new Vizir is soon master of the modes of government; or if he is not, as to the most difficult and intricate parts, he is so far at least as to keep the empire and the capital city in quiet, the men of the law in good humour, and to master the soldiery; the which, perhaps, are the chief and most important ends of his great power. By this proceeding of government, no mutation of the higher officers ever affects the whole; so that when we read of a \* *Cbiaia* to the Vizir, a † *Reis Effendi*, a ‡ *Cbiaous Paschy*, deposed, the spirit of the office remains, and the business still goes on in its proper course.

THE clerks and under-clerks are almost innumerable. Some hundreds of hands are kept constantly at work at the Porte, and each of them with the least talents or genius aspire to some of the highest dignities; keep their eye immediately fixed for years on the office they hope to fill; and by an obstinate perseverance, and never moving

\* Second in power to the Vizir.

† Secretary of State.

‡ Marshal of the Court.

moving out of that course, they frequently attain their end.

**T**H**E**RE is no Christian power can vie with the Porte, for care and exactness in their several offices : business is done with the greatest accuracy : in any important writing words are weighed, and that signification constantly taken, which may most conduce to their own advantage.

**P**APERS of the remotest date, if singly the year of the transaction is known, may be found at the Porte ; every command granted at that time, and every regulation then made, can be immediately produced.

**T**HE rule which government follows in the explanation of treaties, or capitulations, or concessions granted to Christian princes, or in many other cases, is *Precedent* ; the remoter the example, the more respectable ; and most so, what they call the *Ancient Canon* : any political suit in doubt, or depending between themselves and the Christian Powers, may be immediately determined by producing *Precedent*.

**T**HE

THE French ambassadors have often pretended superiority of rank at the Porte: the Turks have as solemnly declared to others the nullity of their pretensions, and that all ambassadors are on the same footing. But as the publick audiences are by rotation, some one must begin, and be the first: hence they take the prime occupant, the first ambassador who was established in their country; and this is the single reason why the French have the priority in point of time at audiences, but they have none of order or pre-eminence.

WHEN they have a mind to expedite business at the Porte, or that it is agreeable to them, no people do it with a greater celerity; when the contrary, they will as artfully protract or delay: numberless excuses, good and bad, are ready; it may remain suspended for months or years.

THE idol the Turks worship is gold; and in all common affairs their ears are opened by that powerful deity. If that is not made use of, the claim of right, engagements, capitulations, or treaties, have often and generally no effect; some master hand must feel the weight of this specious golden argument: but then they are often  
generous

generous enough to trust to a conditional promise, and are content with the fee after the completion of the business.

THE policy of every Turkish minister has himself for its first object; they study solely their own security and permanency in office: this is the only system they are to be taken with. It is in vain to talk of the interest of the empire, either present or future; the question to themselves is, Can I be safe? Can I hold power? If therefore matters of high consequence, of peace or war, are propounded to them; if the one or the other does not coincide, perfectly, with the preservation of their own power, and especially their personal safety, all the money in the universe will not move them.

SOME time after the accession of Sultan Osman to the throne, the Vizir who had handed him to it, found his credit fallen with that prince; that others had the royal confidence, and were plotting and intriguing his deposition.

EDUCATED in the Seraglio, he was no stranger to its intrigues, and assiduously endeavoured to counterwork his enemies;

F

but

but the mines he had laid were generally sprung against himself; so that he found his ruin inevitable.

THE *Reis Effendi* under him was a haughty stern Mussulman; the name of a Christian seemed adverse to his very nature; and every passion was excited, if the least misunderstanding arose between the Porte and any of the neighbouring powers.

THE Vizir, in full vigour of age, thought he could make a proper use of this zealous secretary of state, whose fiery temper, he saw, might readily be prompted to plunge the Porte into a war, and war he ardently wished for: it seemed the most effectual means by which he might preserve himself, augment his sway of power, and, at the head of an army, command even the Grand Seignor, and effectually crush his own enemies.

THERE had been trivial disputes and bickerings with a neighbouring Christian court, and some serious altercations; but the Sultan's temper, disposition, or political maxims, had led him rather to pass over than to resent them.

THE



THE disputes were known to the Vizir ; he found them proper materials to work on the innate hatred the *Reis Effendi* bore to Christians, and the contempt in which he held them ; and give him a welcome occasion to declare his ardent zeal for the honour and glory of Mussulmanism and the Sultan. To this man therefore he opened this contentious affair, loading it with every aggravating circumstance ; yet, feigning to soften the fury of his passion, though he knew it was rather the most effectual means to excite it, he thus brought him to become his stalking-horse in the Seraglio ; set them all in a rage, not excepting the Sultan himself ; and brought them from threats and menaces almost to action.

THE Vizir prepared to put himself at the head of the army to attack that power by whom they were, as the Grand Seignor and *Reis Effendi* pretended, so scandalously and ignominiously insulted.

THE junto who managed this great affair at the Porte, consisted of five persons : the zealous secretary of state always took the lead ; the Vizir, submissive to the will of the sovereign, simply approved ;

though when commands were made out for the troops to assemble, he expressed himself to his confidants with the greatest satisfaction and joy.

BUT, at length, one of the junto opened the scene to a foreign minister, to whom the negotiation had been entrusted; told him the easy means by which the Grand Seignor and *Reis Effendi* would be satisfied, the Vizir disappointed, and the empire preserved in peace.

THAT foreign minister made a proper use of it; stopped for the moment, at the risque of his own life or safety, the precipitancy and fury with which they were carrying on their revenge; and as what they required was more honourable for the other court to grant, than for them to accept, the whole affair was adjusted with almost a single word. The Vizir was soon after deposed and exiled.

THUS ended a violent, precipitate, turbulent negotiation, which lasted a considerable time; entirely set on foot by one man's lust of power, who, to secure that, and his dignity, or to perpetrate his  
revenge

revenge on a few, would have been the cause, perhaps, of the destruction of his country, but certainly of many thousands of his fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects.

THIS personal policy has frequently manifested itself in lesser matters. Their distant governors often aspire to independency, and obtain it. At Babylon, Achmet enjoyed this usurped plenitude of power for several years; and what is more extraordinary, his son succeeded him, with undiminished authority, undisturbed by the Vizir, and died a natural death in his government. Not long after, his son-in-law Solyman Paschaw possessed himself of the same post, and maintained the same independence. They disregarded the Sultan's commands; and though they always answered in terms of respect and submission, they always acted according to their own will. The Vizirs chose rather tamely to submit to this insolent treatment, than by resenting it to excite rebellion or risk their own security, and therefore contented themselves with their mere external professions of obedience.

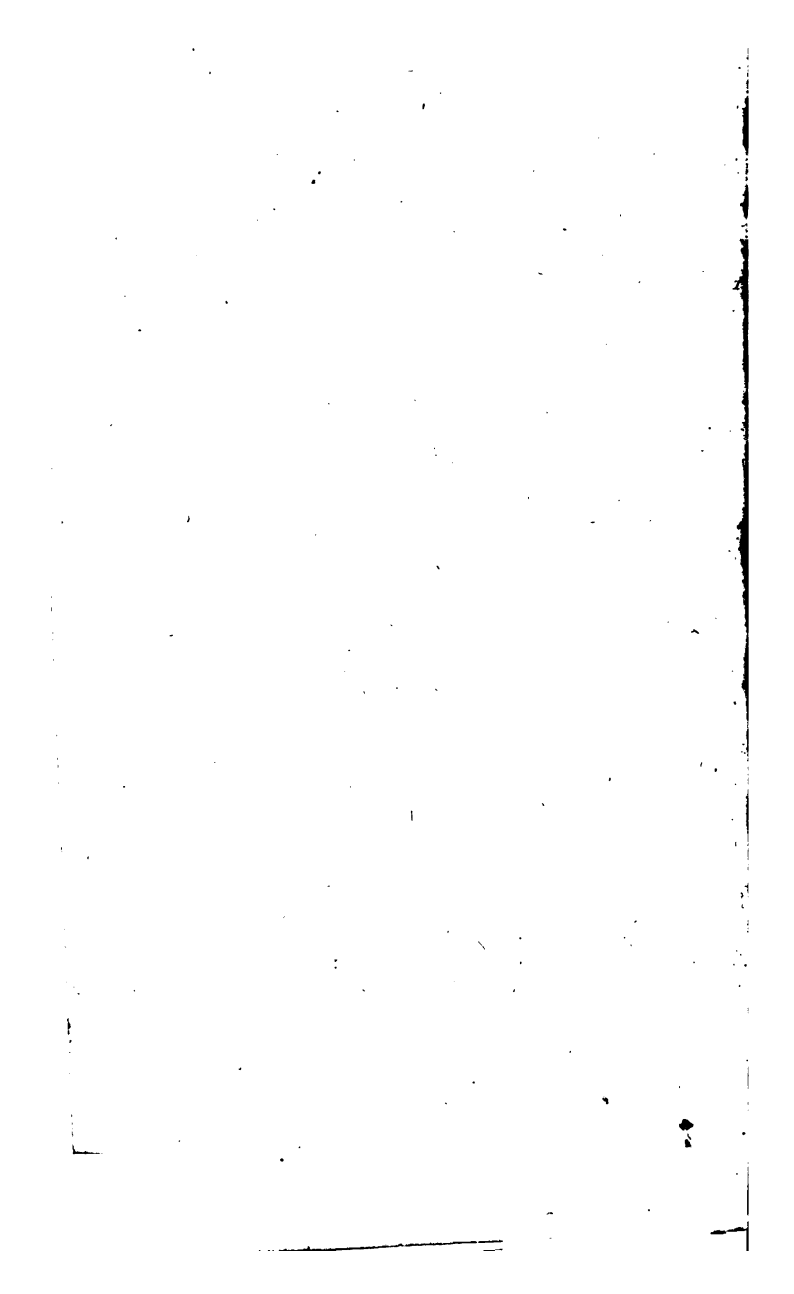
ANOTHER remote governor has supported himself on the same footing for many

years; but as he is worse circumstanced, and not so thoroughly secure, he must therefore seek some underhand protection in the Seraglio, or at the Porte.

ON the death of the Chief Black and his adherents, that protection was lost; he applied at Constantinople to secure in his interest a *Reis Effendi* of sordid venality: for this purpose he furnished a credit for a considerable sum, and, moreover, promised twenty-four of the finest Arabian horses for the Vizir and his minister. The person entrusted sent one to sound the *Reis Effendi*; for such messages are always grateful. On his return, he reported that he left him hesitating, but disposed to accept: it was then thought proper to tempt him with a part of the bribe. The messenger was again dispatched to him with a large bag, sealed. The *Effendi* took the money, put it into his bosom, mused, rubbed his head, stroked his beard; but at length, drawing the messenger close to him, told him in a whisper, he was obliged to him and his principal for intermeddling: he knew that taking the money from them was safe; but from the other, the governor who sought protection, it might be dangerous to himself, he could  
not

not trust him : he then returned the bag, adding that such a step required much reflection. He never would receive the money ; so that the governor was obliged to seek other protection ; and must have found it ; for he exists still with his usual independency.

**END of the FIRST VOLUME.**



OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE  
RELIGION, LAW, GOVERNMENT,  
AND  
MANNERS,  
OF THE TURKS.  
VOL. II.

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—*fas fit mihi visa referre.* OVID. Ep. xvi.

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# EXHIBIT

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## OBSERVATIONS, &amp;c.

## C H A P. X.

*Administration of Turkish Justice.*

**T**HE monarch's despotism is not the greatest evil in Turkey : his subjects would perhaps bear that without much murmuring, or great distress. The radical destruction of all security lies in the iniquitous administration of their laws, which are an impending sword in the hand of corruption, ever ready to cut off their lives and properties.

THE overflowings of a tender mind must not lead us to conclude that the steady conduct of the *Moulah*, or judge of Scutari, and his positive refusal to comply with the *Kislar-Aga's* command, arose from his inviolable attachment to strict justice ; for from the general and known practice it is

rather to be inferred, that this *Moulab* was secured, pre-engaged, and pre-determined, by the potent motive of a bribe ; and that thus tied down, he did not dare act otherwise, nor even venture to obey the peremptory command of the Black Eunuch.

THEY tell us of some rare examples in Turkey of uncorrupt judges ; I have heard of one, but I have known none.

THERE are in Constantinople several courts where causes are determined, and the plaintiff may choose in which to prefer his suit. The inferior are, the *Moulab* of Galata, and the *Stambole Effendi*, or judge of Constantinople ; the higher, the two *Cadi-lesquiers*, or judges of Europe and Asia ; and lastly, the Vizir's divan, which is the supreme court of judicature.

MAHOMET has exempted his descendants from the authority of these jurisdictions ; they are numerous throughout the empire, and are always judged by the heads of their tribe : in any cause, therefore, in which an *Emir*, or \**Green-head*, is concerned, their proper court is that of the *Nakib*  
of

\* The descendants of Mahomet are called Green-heads, from a green turban they wear.

of Sancta Sophia, or *Eiup*; though I have observed the Vizir always keeps a watchful eye over them, and occasionally controuls their proceedings.

THE plaintiff has not only a considerable, but almost a certain advantage over the defendant; for as he chuses his judge, his first care is to secure him.

ALL the judges have a *Naib*, or deputy, who is the real acting man, and generally guides and determines the master: to this man the first application is made, and the bribe is offered: if he finds the sum worth while, and accepts, you are for the most part, secure of gaining your suit.

SOMETIMES, by bribing higher, the defendant may nonsuit his adversary; or he may at least, by quirk and quibble, be enabled to postpone the cause; perhaps, to remove it to another court; and thus protracting it, if he is the richest, tire him out, until, at length, the plaintiff is obliged to drop his pretensions, just or unjust, and content himself with accepting a trifling composition.

THE means of spinning out a suit, and eluding a decision, are various; a defect in  
F 6 the

the forms of procedure, absence or death of witnesses, denying the validity of seals, the hand-writing of others, or even their own; or, as all proof is determined by witnesses, and that these are found in abundance who will swear any thing for pay, when a cause is desperate, an immediate resource is at hand; for such witnesses may be brought to any point as will puzzle the clearest cause, and justify the law's delay.

THERE are different species of witnesses; some your neighbours and old acquaintance; others, casual; and lastly, those who make a professed trade of attending courts of judicature, and live by it. On informing them of the merits of the cause, they first declare that they appear in it merely because they see the hardship and injustice intended against you; that, as they know you to be an honest man, on whose veracity they can absolutely depend, they will therefore affirm as truth whatever you shall aver to them as such. This profession, which they make with an affected earnestness, is the usual Turkish salvo, and seldom fails to appease all their qualms, as well as quiet all their scruples.

OR should it not have that effect; if the witnesses insist on better information, they  
are

are concealed in a private place, where they can hear all that passes in an adjoining apartment. Into this apartment the party with whom you are at variance is decoyed, and there such concessions, by interrogatories, and other artful managements, are drawn from him as may make against himself: these the evidences report on the trial, and declare they have heard. Often indeed, on this occasion, instead of the real party, a friend of your own, who personates him, is introduced into the apartment, where he makes what concessions you please, in hearing of the concealed witnesses, who can neither see nor be seen, and who do not chuse to detect the fraud, but report to the judge what they heard, as spoken by the real person. In law-suits, no practice of this kind can startle a Turk; all he is anxious for, is some pretext, which he thinks may enable him still to pass for an honest man. Thus much for their first species of witness.

THE last sort are those who make a professed trade of it, and are always ready at any man's service for a dollar or two. By habit and long practice these need no casuistry, no salvo to their conscience, but swallow their oath, true or false, and will stand or fall by their evidence.

THE

THE judges have their deputies, who manage their retainers, and other dependents; fellows who constantly attend the courts to bring them custom: their business is to foment litigation, or to raise false suits, called *Avanias*, and attack those on any pretence who are rich and can pay. No man is secure from day to day, especially if he be a Christian or Jew; for let the cause on which the process is founded, be ever so improbable, absurd, or false, he must appear to it and defend it, when, if he has not secured the judge, a cloud of witnesses are brought in, by whose testimony he is assuredly cast.

MANY instances daily happen of demands on property, or complaints of injuries committed, which never had, and never could have, the least grounds of existence.

In general, let the cause be right or wrong, Christians or Jews have no chance against Turks but by dint of money; happy, if that can save them.

NEITHER Christians nor Jews are admitted as evidence against a Turk; but Christians



tians or Jews can witness for or against each other.

THEY have no subpoenas; the law does not permit a summons, or oblige any person to give in their evidence; they must do it uncompelled. Turks, unless your dependents, will not appear in favour of Christian or Jew: the mere force of money must bring them into court. If they really know the justice of the cause, and have seen the fact, they generally expect the higher bribe; and that in proportion as they think their evidence material. If it is for a Christian against a Turk, it is scarce possible at any rate to engage them.

A GREEK built a house, and planted a large garden on a piece of ground which had been possessed by his family near four-score years: all the *Hoggets*, or deeds of conveyance, were in his hands, passed in due form of law by the original Turkish proprietor from whom it was purchased. He nevertheless was suddenly attacked with a law suit by a grandson of that Turk, who declared that his grandfather had not sold the ground; that as his father and he had been long absent on the Grand Seignor's service

service in the Persian war, they could not lay in their claim before; but that he had now the witnesses to prove that the Greek's deeds of conveyance were absolutely false, and therefore insisted to be put in possession of his ground.

THE only resource the Greek had left was, to remove his suit from an inferior court, to which he was summoned, to the Vizir's divan, which, as he was under foreign protection, he easily obtained. His intention by that step was not to bring it to a hearing; he knew that the witnesses against him were ready, and that he would inevitably lose his cause; but the use he made of it, was to bribe some considerable officers of the Porte, to threaten and deter his adversary; whilst underhand he had others who were bringing him to a composition, by which means he stopped all farther prosecution, though at no inconsiderable expence.

THESE cases happen daily to Christians and Jews; especially such as the Turks suspect, or know, to be opulent; often amongst the Turks themselves, but with more caution, as they can out-witness each other with more facility, and that generally the rich can eat up the poorer. Hence  
may

may appear, how precarious purchases of lands or houses made by Christians or Jews are in Turkey; yet it is their ruling passion to possess both.

A MAIN defence or proof in any depending cause, is a *Fetfa*, the previous opinion or decision of the *Mufti*. The case is put to him in fictitious names, and concludes with the demand, Whether *Zayd* has, or has not, a right against *Omar*? Under this is written the *Mufti*'s answer, which is simply, *He has*, or, *He has not*.—*He can*, or, *He cannot*. At the bottom of the paper the *Mufti* signs his name, always subscribing himself, the poor servant of God."

Now, generally, this "poor servant of God" never reads the case; but leaves the whole consideration of it to his *Fetfa Emini*, or deputy, who, as generally, is well bribed before-hand; he puts the case in his own manner, and instructs the *Mufti* how he should subscribe it. This is so true, that there frequently appear opposite *Fetfas* in the same cause; so that when a party thinks himself secure on the *Mufti*'s decision, he finds it of no effect in court, not listened to, and often totally rejected.

ONE principal use to be made of them is, that when the judge is well secured by a bribe, though on the unjust side: he will then lay a stress on the decision of the *Mufti* as perfectly just, and shelter his own injustice under that sanction; or at the worst, when contradictory *Felfas* appear, he may favour the unjust by exhorting the contending parties to an accommodation.

FALSE witnesses should be punished according to the *Koran*; however, that happens but seldom. Now and then a notorious vagrant and offender, detected in his perjury, if it be in a cause against some great man, is led through the streets on an ass, with his face towards the tail, and an inscription declaring him a *Scheat*, or false witness. But even this is seldom seen, except it be on the accession of a Sultan. A new reign is generally ushered in by some such examples. He declares he will rule according to law, justice, and truth: as a proper warning therefore to the people, the Vizir lays hold of half a dozen of these witnesses, and executes that pompous sentence. A punishment so trivial has rather a ridiculous than a serious effect; so that the city of Constantinople swarms with these wretches: but

but was it even as serious as death, it may be justly thought their numbers would not diminish; for they are encouraged by the men of the law, as the principal means by which their judges, who are temporary, and almost annually removed, hasten to be rich, and able to subsist whilst they are out of office.

To do their courts of law all the justice I can, I shall conclude with two remarkable decisions, the one of which fell under my own knowledge; the other is, that I mentioned as having heard it well attested.

A SHIP freighted at Alexandria by Turks, to bring them and their merchandize, consisting in rice and dates, to Constantinople, met with a violent storm in the passage. The master told those freighters who were on board, that he could not save the ship, nor their lives, but by throwing into the sea all the goods on the deck.

THEY consented not only for themselves, but for other freighters, who were at Constantinople. When the ship arrived there, those who had been on board joined with those who had not, to prosecute

secute the master of the ship, in order to recover the value of the goods he had hove overboard. The *Moulab* of Galata, before whom he was summoned, had the case fully represented to him, and his deputy, as usual, had the promise of a reward.

WHEN the parties appeared, and the witnesses were examined; the *Moulab* reflected a-while, took down his book, and gravely opening it, told them, "the book declared, that the master should pay the true value of those very goods;" that is, what the freighters could prove by witnesses any one would give for them, or what they were really worth on board of the ship, at the very moment the master was constrained to throw them into the sea; the only means by which he could save the lives of his passengers, amongst whom were the persons who now sued him for it.

THE freighters ran out of court to find witnesses; but the judge, who knew it was no object on which any would, or could dare to appear, without further hesitation gave his written decree in favour of the master.

THE.

THE second case was before a young *Cadi* at Smyrna. A poor man claimed a house which a rich man had usurped. The former held his deeds and documents to prove his right, but the latter had provided a number of witnesses to invalidate them ; and to support their evidence the more effectually, he presented the *Cadi* with a bag containing five hundred ducats : the *Cadi* received it. When it came to a hearing, the poor man told his story, produced his writings, but wanted that most essential and only valid proof, witnesses.

THE other, provided with witnesses, laid his whole stress on them, and on his adversary's defect in law, who could produce none : he urged the *Cadi* therefore to give sentence in his favour.

AFTER the most pressing solicitations, the judge calmly drew out from under his sofa the bag of five hundred ducats, which the rich man had given him as a bribe ; saying to him very gravely, " You  
 " have been much mistaken in the suit ;  
 " for if the poor man could bring no wit-  
 " nesses in confirmation of his right, I  
 " myself can produce at least five hun-  
 " dred : " he then threw him the bag with  
 reproach

reproach and indignation, and decreed the house to the poor plaintiff.

SUCH instances may happen once in an age, and deserve to be transmitted to posterity; and, indeed, it is frequently related by the Turks themselves, as a most extraordinary and uncommon example.

C H A P.



## C H A P. XI.

*Of Ambassadors.—Their Audiences.*

**T**HE Turks have properly no idea of the law of nations : they consider themselves as the only nation on earth, and regulate their whole conduct with others on positive compact, spontaneous concessions, or usage and custom.

FOREIGN ambassadors, therefore, have no other security, but written concessions of which they have copies, or such privileges unwritten, as their predecessors made use of.

No longer than about fifty years ago, a Vizir, *Fin Aly Pasba*, thought them only civil spies, and was for removing the residence of such troublesome guests to the Prince's-Island, nine miles from Constantinople.

As the trading powers remote from the Turks have no reciprocal advantages to grant them, their ambassadors in Turkey must submit to such terms as the government

ment pleases to grant ; and it is more surprising their capitulations or concessions have been so well observed, than if they had been totally neglected.

WHEN there were only four ambassadors and one resident in Turkey, the character was supported with more dignity, and held in higher esteem by the Turks.

IT is true, that their method of living was not the most sociable, but yet seemed the best calculated to engage respect and esteem. They copied the manners of the great men among the Turks ; visiting rarely ; but when they did, it was with all the pomp of Eastern ostentation : they dressed for that day in the most sumptuous manner, had their servants in their rich liveries, and five or seven led horses, were it only to cross a narrow street. They never appeared in the streets on common occasions, nor went over from Pera, where their residence is, to Constantinople, but with all the ambassadorial pomp and shew of representing the person of a great monarch : if to visit Sancta Sophia, or if to see a *Biram*, it was with written commands furnished to them by the Porte, who took care to have them escorted and attended by proper officers : in short, an ambassador  
was

was thought by the Lower Turks to be a different being from the others of his nation; he was seldom seen; and when he shewed himself, he appeared to their eyes with the splendor of the greatest officers in their own court.

WITHIN these thirty years, foreign ministers of the second order are increased, and with the four ambassadors make up ten.

THE urgent desire the princes of Christendom have shewn to obtain the Grand Seignor's friendship at any rate, has greatly heightened the enormous vanity of the Porte; and the increased number of ministers has rendered the whole body less respectable in the eyes of the people.

IF, perhaps, the same maxims could have subsisted, which had formerly been the rule of conduct between the four ambassadors, the same consequences would have yet resulted; but, however necessary it may be, men used to freedom, and to living in their own way, cannot easily submit to such constraint; and, indeed, there are few men who can suffice to themselves, or find a sufficient fund of entertainment in their own minds. A tacit compact may  
G exist

exist for a few years between four, but it is almost impossible among ten: so that, as difficult as it was formerly to see an ambassador, you now meet them, or those of the second rank, whom the people have not learnt to distinguish from them, at every corner of the streets, and in every part of the city. They make no scruple, at present, to visit Armenian, Greek, or Jew, to run over to a *Biram*, or any publick shew: sometimes they meet with an insult, which they conceal; often with a push, which an insolent Turk will cross the way to treat them with; and are commonly followed with the epithet *Giaur*, infidel, the Turkish epithet of detestation and contempt.

If an accident of the gravest nature were to happen to them in Constantinople, they can expect little or no satisfaction; for the Porte would immediately throw it on their own imprudence, and tell them plainly, as they have done on such occasions, that ambassadors should not expose themselves in a croud, but have acquainted the Porte when they have business abroad, and then they would be properly secured from insult.

IN this situation, where publick ministers are admitted on stipulated conditions and only customary privileges, as easily withdrawn as granted, it behoves them more particularly to live with great circumspection; to support dignity with the Turks and maintain decency and order in their families.

WHEREVER this conduct is duly observed and practised, few inconveniencies have ever arisen in Turkey. With such a demeanor the ambassador will find a satisfaction in himself, ease and order in his family, no revels amongst his domestics, no riots and no insults; and consequently no complaints are made to himself, or to the Porte, both of which will otherwise too frequently happen. The Turks have a homely proverb, which they have not improperly applied on such occasions: they say, "the fish stinks first at the head;" meaning, That if the servant is disorderly, it is because the master is so.

THE dignity and importance assumed by ambassadors in their representative character, was, for some ages, it should seem, thought too much on a level with personal sovereignty, to admit of a fixed residence, or permanency at any court.

IN those times, therefore, ambassadors were sent only on very extraordinary, and temporary occasions; as, on settling some immediate important point in contest; on a negotiation of marriages; or, more generally, on the conclusion of a long and bloody war; probably, as a publick mark of a sincere reconciliation, and as proper notice to the subjects for their future conduct, authenticating the security of their mutual intercourse.

THE Turks religiously observe this latter very ancient custom: ambassadors never appear reciprocally but after a war; and wherever the frontier is removed by the events of that war, there the exchange of ambassadors from the two courts is made.

As soon as the ambassador passes on the Turkish frontier, the Grand Seignor is considered as his host, and the officer who receives him, styles him the Grand Seignor's *Musaphir*, his guest; whether it is by ancient custom amongst them, a remain of the general hospitality of former times, or from the respect in which they hold the office of ambassador; or whether it be only a parade of the Grand Seignor's power and magnificence: whatever be the motive, he is,

is, however, immediately provided with every necessary for his journey, or a considerable allowance given him in money, which is continued during his stay at Constantinople.

THE ambassador from a commercial power claims the same right, and enjoys it, though in a less degree; his necessities, however, are fully supplied; but as soon as the journey ends, that emolument ceases.

A VIZIR *Aga* is sent by the Porte to receive him on the frontier, and to conduct him safe; his route is traced, his resting-days in the several towns are fixed, as also the *Thaym*, or allowance, he is to have for his subsistence, and the number of horses and carts allotted for his servants and baggage: he is treated with respect and distinction, and as well provided as the road will afford: the several districts of the country furnish the expence, and it is passed at the treasury in the article of their contributions.

THE countries through which the Christian ministers pass, are generally gainers by it: for if one dollar is necessary to defray their expence, in adding another as a

regale to the *Vizir-Aga*, they obtain from him a receipt for four, which they pass to the Grand Seignor as really paid.

It is worth remarking with what incredible precaution, politeness, and lenity, the commissary, or *Vizir-Aga*, treats the Turks in the course of this journey; but when he comes among the Bulgarian Christians, if the ambassador does not interfere, he will not restrain himself from using them with the cruellest oppression and indignity.

THE flattering prospect with which an ambassador is issued into the Grand Seignor's territories, gives him not only the hopes of a continuance, but of an agreeable reception and residence near the throne of the prince.

WHEN he arrives, he is welcomed by a message from the Vizir, flattered and caressed by a number of Greeks, Armenians, and Jewish dependants, with a servility the lowest and basest, and most disgusting.

THE first opening of his function is to the Vizir: they both seat themselves, the ambassador on a stool, the Vizir on the corner



ner of his sofa ; mutual civilities pass between them, without any variation in language since the empire began. He is told, " That as long as his master observes the laws of friendship with them, the Grand Seigneur will correspond." The honours of the *Cafan*, sweetmeats, coffee, sherbet, and perfume, are presented to him ; but when he departs they clap their hands, hiss him out of the room, and two officers who attend him, one on each side, attempt at half way, to make him turn and salute the Vizir, who never stirs off of his corner : he who forgets his character may be surprised into it ; but he who does not, keeps on his pace, and drives on his leaders.

ON an occasion that offered of adjusting the ceremonial with an ambassador who thought himself offended, this usage was redressed, and it is to be hoped continues no longer.

How greatly soever such indecency may shock the delicacy of a man jealous of his master's dignity, he has a much more humiliating scene to go through, at his audience of the Grand Seigneur.

THE time appointed for the ambassador to be over the water \* is the morning, at the break of day : on his landing he is received by the *Cbiaux Pasbi*, or marshal of the court, in a house destined for that purpose, the stairs of which are no better than a ladder, and the room fit rather for the reception of a Polish Jew than for a man of his dignity.

OFTEN, and indeed generally, the *Cbiaux Pasbi* is not there at the ambassador's arrival; but the common excuse is, that he is detain'd in the moschee at his prayers.

WHEN the first civilities are passed over, an insinuation is made to the ambassador, that he must expect the *Cbiaux Pasbi* will ride at his right hand. This part of the ceremonial, long contested, but never given up by the Turks, except only when they have been beaten into it, leaves the ambassador the sole resource of protesting; all other opposition is in vain: he, however, insists, that a gentleman of his retinue

\* His house is in the suburb of Pera, separated from Constantinople by a small bay or creek of the Bosphorus; it is the port for shipping: this he must pass whenever he comes into the city.

nue shall ride at his left. With whatever seeming reluctance they admit this claim, if urged with proper resolution it succeeds. It has indeed been often productive of serious contestation and disorder in the march; and sometimes almost of a suspension of the audience.

AFTER waiting some time in that miserable chamber at the water-side, the Vizir's command arrives to let them know, that he is ready to depart from the Porte to the Seraglio. The cavalcade then begins, and marches in state to the Vizir's door, where, whether it rains, hails, or snows, the ambassador must remain on horseback in the street, to see his pomp, and to salute his highness and his whole court, as they pass by. When they are near the gate of the Seraglio, the ambassador's train advances slowly: on his arrival, he finds the Vizir seated in the divan-chamber.

In the middle of this chamber an old square stool is prepared for the ambassador; and he is there fixed, if the stool can support him, at least for two hours, hearing the decision of causes he does not understand; though if it be a pay-day for the Janisaries and Spahis, and this the Turks generally chuse, he is entertained with seeing about two thousand four hundred

dred yellow bags of money told out and distributed; and this lasts at least twice two hours; so that, in a cold day, without a fur, his very vitals may freeze; and at any time the spine of his back must suffer cruelly, for he has nothing to lean against to support or ease it.

AFTER this part of the scene is over a new one succeeds: the dinner is served; the ambassador sits on his stool, the Vizir on his elevated sofa; a round table is brought between them, at each side of which is placed a handkerchief folded up to wipe the mouth and hands; fifty dishes, succeeding each other, every half minute, come in like a torrent; a head-servant stands near the ambassador with his arms bare: his office is to tear a fowl in pieces, and to lay the choicest morsels of it before them, all which he performs with his fingers; he commends without ceasing the excellent dinner, whilst the Vizir presses his guest to eat, and, perhaps, enters into familiar conversation with him: and, at the last, to crown the repast, one draught of sherbet is served.

THE Grand Seignor all the while peeps through a dark window to see the whole entertainment, and as soon as it is over retires to his audience-room.

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THE *Chiaux Pasbi* enters with his *Talkish*, or order in writing, to the Vizir, to tell him, that the monarch is on his throne: he receives it with the utmost submission, first touches his forehead with it, then kisses it, and having read it, puts it into his breast, and departs.

AFTER his departure, the ambassador is told he must cross the court-yard to go to the audience: he is preceded by the *Chiaux Pasbi* with all his officers and attendants richly clad.

BUT he does not immediately enter the audience-room; he is stopt in the court-yard, where, under a tree, by way of bench, is a single old board, on which, at other times, grooms, hostlers, and scullions, lie to sun themselves, though it sometimes serves them for less decent purposes: on this, that he should not wait too long standing, they desire him to sit until he is vested with the *Caslan*. They do not examine whether this bench is wet or dry, clean or dirty, nor whether it rains or snows. As soon as the ceremony of vesting is over, two *Capigis Pasbis* seize him by the shoulders, and conduct him in. He finds the monarch at one corner placed on his sofa, higher by much than common, and covered

with a canopy; his legs rather pending: at his side lies a rich sword, and some regalia. He eyes the ambassador askew, hears his harangue, which, were it spoken with the eloquence of a Cicero, would gain little attention: nor does it import in what language it is pronounced; for the real one is given in to the Vizir before, translated by the Drugoman, or interpreter of the Porte; who, after the ambassador has done, repeats it extempore, in the Turkish language to the Grand Seignor.

THE monarch speaks a few words to the Vizir, who advances towards the middle of the room, and answers the ambassador in their usual common-place language: this the interpreter explains, and thus the audience finishes, and the ambassador is dismissed.

AFTER all is over, he expects to be delivered from the tediousness of that day, and without further obstacle to mount his horse, and be gone: he mounts, it is true; but in the second quadrangle of the Seraglio, he is stopped, and obliged to wait on horseback under a tree, until the Vizir passes before him on his return home; and then he is suffered to depart.

PERSONAL

PERSONAL vanity, or national pride, has not permitted Christian writers to set this ceremonial in its true light; nay, some ambassadors have been for softening and palliating the worst of its indecorum. They have gone so far as even to pretend, that the presents they carry, and which they are obliged to give at every audience, reflect honour on themselves as the givers, but not on the Turks as receivers.

WHOEVER is acquainted with the Oriental practice, and knows the ostentation, pride, and haughtiness of Turkish government, must know that they look upon, and consider such presents as actual tributes.

THERE is one of their neighbouring courts who have taken it in a true, and a becoming sense; and stipulated in their treaties, that presents shall be reciprocal, that they shall be exchanged, but not insolently exacted.

WE may be surprized that other courts have not followed this example; but what appears more surprizing, is, that very court never took into serious consideration the nature of the ceremonial, and the indecent usage of their representatives. It is surely strange that the Imperial court  
should

should have neglected it at the treaty of Passarowitz, since they then thought it expedient to make it an express article, "that their ambassadors should appear at these audiences in what dress they pleased." For before that time they were obliged to use the Turkish habit. They most certainly were not informed of all the mortifying particulars I have related, or they chose to pass over with contempt, what might appear to them only the vain ostentation of a Turkish court.

I MUST, however, observe, that except the mortifications which attend an audience, it may on the whole be said, that if ambassadors are not incumbered with disagreeable business, such as may interfere with the interests of Turkish individuals, or of the Porte in general, they may live in Turkey with great dignity, ease, and satisfaction.



## C H A P. XII.

*Miscellaneous observations on the manners of  
the Turks.*

**I**T may be a question, whether men, before they assembled together into cities, or formed societies within the enclosure of towns, were not more pure and undefiled in their manners, and endowed with greater rectitude of morals. We have reason to think they were, from the history of mankind; and our own observations will generally confirm us in the opinion.

THE more men are together, the more their wants increase, the more their passions are exalted; and they seek every means to supply the one, and satisfy the other.

HENCE, I once concluded, arose the difference between the city and the rustick Turk: the former, artful and designing; the latter, open and simple, though equally with the other affecting an air of contempt and backwardness in their services towards  
Christians;

Christians; the result, I suppose, of education and religion.

FROM this appearance I was tempted to enquire as diligently as I could, whether the Turks, living in separate hamlets, unconnected and unmixed with Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, were more virtuous and honest than in cities and villages, where all these religions were professed, and the different sects herding indiscriminately together, made, as it were, but one people. I put the question to several, without obtaining a satisfactory answer: at length the same *Effendi*, with whom I conversed concerning the *Koran*, who was a native of Bosnia, had lived long in his own country, and who seemed always to think freely in matters of religion, answered me, that they scarce knew in a mere Turkish village, what trick, deceit, or roguery, were amongst each other; that having observed and compared the difference between them and the villages in which Turks and Greeks were mixed, he found, by undoubted observation, that the latter tainted the whole community; that they taught the Turks to deceive, to embroil their own families, seduced them into processes and law-suits, inspired the *Cadi* of the district with the lust of gain, and, that they might have his

his protection, became his instruments in the iniquitous means of acquiring it.

HE added, that nothing could furnish better examples, or more illustrate the subject, than the manners of the Turcomen, bands of whom are itinerant through Asia, like the ancient patriarchs, and amongst whom fraud and deceit are almost unknown; but yet if they happen to mix with the Armenians or Jews in villages or towns, they become as consummately artful as any of them; but then they seldom dare return to their own community.

BUT how plausible soever this may seem, I should think, on farther reflexion and better acquaintance with Turkish manners, juster causes may be assigned for their depravity; because where men are exposed by a corrupt administration of justice, or otherwise, to oppression; self-defence and necessity will teach them cunning and deceit, without other instructors.

HE must be the righteous *Cadi* of Smyrna, who will not solicit bribes, nor foment litigation, and excite law-suits, since by these means he acquires wealth almost without a risk; and he must be a most righteous *Pasha*, indeed, who, in traversing

ing a country, will not plunder for himself in every town and village through which he passes, under the pretence of taking his due; or who will hinder his retinue and dependants of taking his due; or who will hinder his retinue and dependents from plundering in like manner. As therefore the people cannot prevent the one or the other by force, they will naturally exert their whole faculties to escape oppression; but lies, hypocrisy, and evasion, are their only instruments of defence. Habituated to this, from one step they easily take the other, and extend it through all their dealings: thus the tyranny and the example of their superiors must be allowed to contribute greatly to their degenerate manners.

THE changes of *Pasbas* from one government to the other, sometimes from the confines of Persia to the confines of Europe, is one of the greatest grievances, and, indeed, almost the greatest the subjects suffer under what may properly be called ministry, or government in Turkey; for although a *Pasba* on this occasion is limited to an allowance, which the country furnishes from each district, in the same manner, and with the same indemnification, as they defray the journey of an ambassador;

bassador; and that the orders of the Sultan strictly prohibit any farther exactions; yet if he finds an effectual venal protection at the Porte, or that the interior of the Seraglio has the power, and are sufficiently corrupt to share in his extortions, he gives little attention to the sovereign's orders, or to his stipulated *Tbaym* or allowance; but regardless whether they are Turks, Christians, or Jews, who are they prey of his rapacity, he drains the very vitals of the country, from the beginning of his journey to the end, and plunders without remission or remorse.

FOR six years, during the power of Bechir the Black *Kislar-Aga* who was executed in sultan Machmut's reign, this evil became enormous; every *Pasba* strove to be his creature, and continually gave him, or his dependents, large sums for their support and protection. Commit what outrage he pleased, it was in vain for the inhabitants of those districts through which he passed to cry out against him, to come in bands with *Arz Mabzars*, or general representations of their grievances to the Grand Seigneur.

If they delivered their complaints to the Porte, the Vizir dared not lay them before the  
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the Sultan, dreading exile, or worse: if presented to the Sultan in his way to the moschee, it was either received from the complainants by the Black *Kislar-Aga*, or immediately put into his hands and suppressed. The proceeding of the ministry on these occasions was to tire out the complainants with delays, and then exhort them to return home, and trust to the Vizir for satisfaction and redress.

AFTER the execution of this Black, the Grand Seignor sent out the thunder of his commands, with threats of disgrace and punishment against all *Pasbas* guilty of rapine, prohibiting it for the future, enjoining them at the same time to give no presents to his ministers; for that, he found, was the pretence under which their rapine was exercised.

THE evil ceased for a time: it never continues in one state, but ebbs and flows, and shifts according to the variation of power in men about the Sultan, who may sometimes oblige it to intermit, like the paroxysms of a fever; but his politico-medical abilities are not sufficient to put an effectual stop to the return.

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NOTWITHSTANDING the general abuse of power, the venality and the other defects which may be found in the Turkish government, their interior policy, or provision for the security of individuals, is excellent, and worthy of imitation.

HIGHWAY robberies, house-breaking, even pilfering, are almost unknown amongst them; be it in time of peace or of war, the roads are as secure as their houses; the whole empire, especially through the high roads, may be always traversed with the utmost safety; and, considering the continual run of passengers, it is wonderful the very few tragical accidents which happen; not one, perhaps, in several years.

THIS security possibly may be founded on the same principle on which our divisions of hundredths and tythings were first instituted.

FOR, in like manner, the whole Turkish empire is divided into different districts of country, which are answerable for every robbery or murder committed within its limits; they are therefore vigilant to prevent either, as they soon feel the weight of a severe and summary justice: for on the  
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least pretence, a great officer of the Porte is immediately dispatched to take their examination; the district pays the expence of this inquest, whether they exculpate themselves or not; nor does he depart, until he takes with him almost their last farthing.

THE meaner Turks, however, must have some motive superior to that of fear to restrain them; for the country is so vast, and the roads are so open, from one extremity of the empire to the other, that they might rob and murder with impunity, and save themselves in some distance, notwithstanding every human precaution to prevent it.

I HAVE known a Franc in his own dress, who travelled alone round the camp of a Turkish army assembling for the Persian war, and passed through it, without being asked a question, or receiving the least interruption in his journey.

WHETHER the Turks look on stealing with disdain, as a baseness unworthy of human nature; or whether they do indeed fear the laws, which, however, are not very severe; house-breaking, or pilfering,  
by



by Turks, scarce ever happens in Constantinople.

In that city the Bulgarians are those most to be apprehended; they are generally the thieves; but yet you may live there with security, and your doors remain almost continually open.

THE Greeks seldom rob any thing considerable; but their fingers are as nimble as their genius is sprightly: they will pilfer. Every little, they say, accumulates until it becomes a heap; and that little is scarce missed, or, if missed, is not an object worth enquiring after. In general, however, many of the Island-Greeks are sober and honest, except with their tongues, for they will say and unsay, invent and tergiversate, with a marvellous promptness and fluency.

BIRTH does not recommend to great offices in Turkey; merit and abilities may exalt the cottager to the highest office of the empire.

THE Turks do not think that blood can convey either the same faculties of the mind, or the same moral qualities, from the ancestor to the successor; but they believe

lieve that virtue, wisdom, courage, riches, in short, every distribution of gifts and talents, and all the different ranks and orders of men, are decreed and allotted by the Supreme Being to the different individuals of society, without any regard to particular families; so that even the descendants of their prophet, who are very numerous, remain generally in the lowest and most abject state, enjoying only some trifling privileges, which can never influence their fortune.

I OBSERVED, however, that some families are respected by the people, merely for the merit of their ancestors. One, indeed, the descendent of Ibrahim Kan, is particularly distinguished by all ranks; and some pretend, that he is visited twice a year by the Sultan himself.

IBRAHIM was Vizir to Mahomet II. That Sultan, when he had subdued Walachia, left Adrianople, and passed over into Asia to chastise several princes who had revolted from him. He was stopped in his return from that expedition by an impostor, who pretended to be Mustapha, the son of Bajazet, lost or killed in the battle against Tamerlane. This impostor was besieging the city of Nicea in Bythinia, where Mahomet

homet attacked and routed him ; but, soon after, was taken ill of a dysentery, and died. His son Amurath was then in Europe warring against the Bulgarians. In this critical situation, the Vizir Ibrahim conveyed advice to Amurath of his father's death, but concealed it forty-one days from the knowledge of the army : public business went on as if he was alive till Amurath arrived.

For this important service, Ibrahim had the title of *Kan*, almost equivalent to that of king, conferred on him, with many honours and large emoluments ; all of which were confirmed to him and his descendents by Solyman Canauni, or the Lawgiver, commonly called the Magnificent. This family bears the name of Ibrahim Kan Oglu : they have built and endowed a number of religious houses, and public *Kbans* for the reception of travellers, of which they are perpetual inspectors and directors. They are, in like manner as the Sultan himself, exempt from mixing blood by marriage with any other family, and only have concubines. They can refuse to accept any office in the administration ; and I have been told, that they have the only hereditary title in the empire, that of Great Huntsman, or Great Falconer.

AMONGST the descendants of Vizirs, the Kiaporli family, of whom there are few remaining; and in the law, that of Damas-Zade, whose ancestor was the first *Mufii* after the taking of Constantinople; are both infinitely respected by the people.

IN general, I think to have seen, that the people pay regard to the descendants of *Pasbas*, or of considerable *Effendis*: perhaps the attention shewn them, may be in proportion to their wealth and connections, or their publick donations.

BUT what is certain, and seems an essential mark of distinction, is, that any man in the empire who marries a lady descended from a *Pasba*, or an eminent person in the law, or, indeed, of any other profession, must content himself without any other wife; nor does he dare have a concubine in the same house. I have seen it carried farther by a Vizir who was thus married; for though he had his concubines out of the house, he was obliged to conceal it very carefully from his lady.

THE Turks are strong in their parental affections, and the children reciprocal in their obedience, submission, and filial duty: such

such education leads them to much seeming modesty with their superiors, and the young men to great veneration towards the old. Perhaps this, with their total, and very early separation from women, has infused that remarkable bashfulness in their behaviour towards them, and occasions that respect with which they treat the sex.

A MAN, meeting a woman in the streets, turns his head from her, as if it were forbidden to look on her: they seem to detest an impudent woman, shun and avoid her.

ANY one, therefore, among the Christians, who may have discussions or altercations with Turks, if he has a woman of spirit, a virago for his wife, sets her to rout and brow-beat them; and by this means not unfrequently gains his point.

THE highest disgrace and shame would attend a Turk who should rashly lift his hand against a woman; all he can venture to do, is to treat her with harsh and contemptuous words, or to go off.

THE sex lay such stress on this privilege, that they are frequently apt to indulge  
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their passion to excess, to be most unreasonable in their claims, and violent and irregular in the pursuit of them. They will importune, teaze, and insult a judge on the bench; or even the Vizir at his divan: the officers of justice do not know how to resent their turbulence: and it is a general observation, that to get well rid of them, they often give them their cause.

A REMARKABLE scene was acted by the women at the accession of sultan Mustapha.

His Vizir, Regib Mehemet Pasha, who, towards the end of the preceding reign, had found himself unstable in his post, and who expected daily by the internal intrigues of the Seraglio to be deposed, neglected to provide the necessary supply of corn and rice for the yearly consumption of the city, though an essential part of his duty; the publick granaries were almost empty, and less rice than usual had been imported: however, contrary to his expectations, he found himself invested with full power by the new Sultan, and rendered absolute; but then it was too late in the season for him to introduce plenty. Bread mixed up with oats, barley, millet and

and sand, was dear and scarce; and rice hardly to be bought at any price.

IN this distress, the men bore their want with passive and sullen discontent; but the women, impatient and daring, assembled in a considerable body, and with hammers, chissels, and files, attacked the magazines, where they pretended rice was in great quantities monopolized. No opposition could stop them; and whilst the publick officers were perplexed what party to take, they broke open locks, bars, and bolts, entered the magazines, took with them such quantities as they could carry off, and went away unmolested.

NONE of these female rioters were ever punished, as far as we knew; and if you spoke to a grave Turk about them, he would tell you with a sneer, it was only a mutiny of turbulent women.

I HAVE heard it averred by a person of great veracity, who had lived for some years in a Sultan's *Harem* of the blood-royal, that it was impossible for women to behave with more decency and modesty than the Turkish ladies did, and that they treated each other with the greatest politeness.

IN families of the higher class, where education is more exalted, where reading of their own language, or the Arabian, is probably cultivated; precepts of virtue and morality, of gentle demeanor and good breeding, chastity of manners, with whatever decorates the sex, and renders them amiable, may be inculcated.

BUT, in general, it is known that the women who are sold or presented to their great men, either for wives or concubines, have their price and value regulated not only according to the beauty or form of the person, but according to those acquired graces, and artificial allurements, which they have industriously been taught: these are always such as may conduce to raise and inflame the passions. Hence they teach them vocal and instrumental music; certain peculiar affectations in their gait; and often such dances as to a modest spectator would appear rather indecent.

FACTS, by which we can be thoroughly assured of the female characteristic in Turkey, are difficult to come at; accident may throw them in our way: one fell in mine, which, if it did not seem to suggest too uncharitable and ungenerous a way of thinking,



thinking, might lead us to judge of the whole : *Crimine ab uno disce omnes.*

THE *Harems* of great men, that is, all the ladies, and their attendants, are in the summer season frequently permitted to walk abroad an airing on foot, either in the fields on the borders of the Bosphorus, or other such public places : these parties generally consist of twenty or thirty, and sometimes of forty or fifty women, according to the opulence of the master ; and they are always attended by the guardians of their chastity the Black Eunuchs.

It is common with the Franks or Christian foreigners to pass over to the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus for an evening's recreation. Two of them went thither as usual with ladies, attended by Janizaries and servants. As they were returning slowly, they heard a confused noise of female voices following them. Their curiosity prompted them to see as well as hear : they turned short, and stopped. They found these voices proceeded from two *Harems*, composed of near forty women : their faithful watchmen the Blacks attended on each side, guarding them, though at some distance. One of the spectators stood longer, and with more earnestness to

contemplate their figure and behaviour. He thought they would rather avoid than approach him. He was mistaken: for on a sudden, he found himself seized by a seeming dapper brisk girl, followed by the whole band; who first accosting him with indelicate amorous expletives, and after with soothing and tender expressions, attempted to unravel the mystery of his whole dress.

THE force of the conflict, and the army of females about him, left him but the single resource of laughter and struggles: he could not debarraiss himself from such numerous, determined assailants by threats nor intreaties; nor vanquish the vehemence of their curiosity, by representing the shame to which they exposed themselves, by a behaviour so grossly and so publicly indecent.

AN old Janizary attending him, stood at some distance, as it were in amaze. His Mahometan bashfulness would not permit him to advance towards women; nor would he have dared to lay his hands on them: all he ventured at in the fray, was to work up a stern countenance towards the Black Eunuchs, and with a Stentorian voice to exclaim against them and their  
wards,

wards, telling them they were the guardians of prostitutes, rather than of modest women; and urging them to exert themselves to free the man from such importunate violators.—All in vain.

A YOUNG man of the company, a foreigner, either envying the other, or prompted by compassion at seeing his untoward situation, boldly advanced; and as he spoke more Turkish than the person engaged, began to expostulate with them, sometimes with a smile, and sometimes with a frown. Whether his countenance, his form, or his greater youth, were more attractive, they at once quitted hold of their first prey, flew on him with eager and inquisitive hands; and whilst he underwent the same treatment, gave the other time to reach his boat. The youth, robust and active, disengaged himself after much struggling, and at length with difficulty saved himself by flight; happy not to have been quite stripped, and to have been able to join the company with decent covering.

I MUST add, as the general opinion, and what I have always heard, that the Turkish ladies in general are rather immodest and libidinous. This may possibly be applied with some justice to those women who are

fold; or presented to the great and opulent:

HENCE a reflection occurred to me, which I have often made to sensible Roman Catholics in their own country, that a convent education for young ladies destined to act a social part, and live amongst mankind, is improper and dangerous.

THEY are kept up recluse, debarred the converse of men, until they are almost nubile: if they drop a word concerning them, it is reckoned indecent, and draws on them the frown of their superior; even to think there is a sex different from their own, is almost criminal; in short, every natural sentiment must be suppressed.

THEIR teachers do not reflect, that human nature craves after what is forbidden; that unextinguishable curiosity works up the imagination, and inflames the passions; and that, therefore, young women just freed from confinement, and entering the world without experience and without knowledge, must fall a prey to the first bold invader of their affections. Such an education frequently occasions either a shipwreck of their virtue, or a disproportioned and unhappy marriage: thus a youth of  
constraint

constraint ends in a life of misery. Let them converse early with men, and mix betimes with that general society in which they are to pass their lives; for lessons of modesty must make the stronger impression on them, when they see the mischiefs and misfortunes which attend the want of it; it is adding example to precept.

WHENCE the idea of the transcendant beauty of Turkish women has arisen, is difficult to say, unless it be from the warm imaginations of inventive travellers, who have raised these beauteous phantoms, and became enamoured with originals they never saw.

HENCE, throughout Christendom, the fair Circassian has been the subject of romance and song; when, perhaps, there are not two men in it who ever saw one of those Venus's. It is certainly impossible in Turkey: for from infancy to old age, scarce a single trace of a Turkish woman's face is perceptible. No adult maiden is ever visible, nor no married woman, except to their parents, brethren, or husband. As soon as they put on the *Macremma*, or Veil of Modesty, every feature of their face is covered, except a small part of the nose and eyes; and some have carried that cus-

tom to such an extreme of delicacy, that when they feed their poultry, if there is cocks amongst their hens, they will not appear before them without it. If Praxiteles or Apelles, with an angelic conception added to their art, had met the two *Harems* on the borders of the Bosphorus, they could not have formed the least idea of the contour, form, or proportion of the face and features of one person in them; all to be distinguished was black or blue eyes, and a faint perception of the complexion of the skin.

HOWEVER, as they carefully preserve their faces from the harsh influence of the different changes of the air; as their hours are regular, and they are not exposed to a nocturnal atmosphere, or to the mixed warm exhalations of crowded rooms; we might expect, that if the original formation is beautiful, and nature has given them a fair and vivid complexion, those charms would be preserved many years, and only suffer a gradual decay at the approach of old age.

THE Greek women are not tied down to the rigorous observance of a Turkish restraint; they visit frequently, and, except in the street, their faces are not muffled  
up

up in the *Macremma*. Of these we may speak with certainty; they have, for the most part, good features and pleasing countenances; but in general rather a tarnished than a fair complexion.

THE one and the other, indeed, become decayed before nature intended it: they destroyed the whole texture of the solids by the too frequent use of hot baths, and they hasten too early to matrimony.

THE Turkish women are obliged to bathe by the precepts of their religion; the Greeks by custom, luxury, and choice.

THE numbers of publick baths at Constantinople are prodigious, and of the private ones incredible. The last, indeed, are the highest indulgence of luxury and vanity; for all who are any ways in easy circumstances, have convenient baths of their own; and among the more opulent it is common to have them most magnificent.

THE Turks and Jews may, on account of their religion, be held excuseable, even in the extravagance of that expence; but the Greeks and Armenians have only empty vanity to apologize for it: they nevertheless

less indulge that vanity, although they tremble that a Turk should know they dare imitate them, or outvie them in magnificence.

THE publick and private baths may differ in their ornaments and dimensions, but do not vary in their models and structure; they seem formed merely for a decent and a modest use.

THEY consist of three rooms: the first is a large hall, where the bathers wait till the bath is ready for them; the second is a room in which they dress and undress; and the third is the bathing-room. The bath itself is a large stone or marble cistern, of capacity sufficient to receive a man lying in it at his full length: in the public baths a number of these cisterns are placed: they are supplied with water by several pipes conducted through the walls. The bathman, or woman, according to the sex of the bather, attends, washes, rubs, and dries them with surprising dexterity and art, suppling and stretching the joints in such a manner, that imagination would persuade one they dislocate every part of the body; and yet this operation occasions rather an agreeable sensation.



THE women are generally attended by a female slave, or servant of their own: they undress in the room appointed for that purpose, and put on their bathing-cloaths, which are usually of blue and white checked cotton. After they have bathed, they return again into this room; there is a sofa in it, on which they throw themselves and are dressed, and when sufficiently cool, return into the hall. Those who chuse it, have the bath heated on purpose for them; but two never bathe together in the same cistern; and different hours of admittance are assigned to the different persons who intend bathing the same day. Indeed, the heat will not admit of a long stay in the bathing cistern, though most who use them indulge to too great an excess.

It is customary in Turkey to marry young boys of thirteen or fourteen to girls of eleven or twelve, and sometimes even under that age: the practice is common among all sects of religion. They are joined together on the good faith of their parents or relations; for they are never permitted to see each other before the nuptial night. Various tricks, it is said, have been played on these occasions among the Greeks and Armenians: the lame, the deformed, and the blind, were often match-  
ed

ed to beauty and vigour. When the parties imposed on complained, the contrivers of their disappointment would answer with a compliment to their beauty and good qualities, and a profession that their inducement to this fraud was only a desire to improve the race. This injury is the greater, as Christians cannot easily obtain a divorce : but at present, indeed, the Greek girls become daily wiser, and generally insist on a peep at a window, or in a room ; and they are not so scrupulously delicate, as not to unveil to their suitor. Nay, they often marry without consulting farther than their own inclination.

THE Turks are more conveniently circumstanced in regard of the matrimonial tie. The Grand Seignor is intirely exempt from it ; he claims the privilege Mahomet reserved for himself ; and to avoid a formal contract of affinity, or, in the Turkish phrase, not to mix blood with any family in his empire, he has no wife, but only concubines. The first of them who brings him a son is called the *Sultana Haseki* : she is crowned with flowers, takes on her the prerogatives of a wife, and governs in the *Harem*.

.OTHER

OTHER Turks are allowed four wives. They may marry, as it is called, *Kabbin*; that is, they appear before the tribunal of justice, declare the woman to be their wife, and enter into an obligation, that whenever they shall think proper to dismiss her, they will maintain the children, and give her a certain stipulated sum, which they proportion either to their circumstances, or to the time they judge it may be convenient for them to cohabit with her. It is no stain to a woman's character that she is thus put away, nor much impediment to her finding another husband.

AMONGST the middling or common people, the sum is generally very moderate, and runs from \* five thousand to a hundred thousand aspers.

HENCE you find few of this rank who have more than one wife at one time; for they frequently change, dismissing one and taking another, as it is done with little trouble, and at no great expence.

THE opulent have often three or four wives, and perhaps many concubines; but  
if

\* An hundred and twenty aspers is two shillings and sixpence.

if they chuse to abide by the more laudable part of the law, and keep only two wives, it is equally convenient; for they may alternate and change as often as the number will admit.

AFTER divorce they may retake the same woman a second, but not a third time, unless she has been married to another husband. No man can marry a divorced woman sooner than four months and a half after a total separation from the former husband.

THE man may oblige the divorced woman to nurse any infant she has borne him till it is two years old.

FROM hence we may readily account why few common prostitutes are to be found amongst the Turks: their very religion furnishes them, whatever their constitution and temper may be, with a superabundant variety and satiety of women.

WHETHER from such a promiscuous use of women, or from whatever other cause it may arise, there is not that number of children in Turkish families which the idea of polygamy naturally suggests: nay, it may be affirmed, that they have  
not,

not, in general, as many children as are found in common families of Christians or Jews. Giul Achmet, who died *Pasha* of the Morea, had the greatest number I have heard of in one Turkish family; he had nineteen. Among Christians, I knew one family of twenty-one, and another of twenty-three children, by one mother in each family.

MAY it not from hence be inferred, that polygamy is deviating from the law of nature? Is it not a strong presumptive argument to prove, that as the number of male and female births run almost in equal proportion; so to keep up a constant order of population, one woman only should be allowed to one man.

NAY, that this supposed proportion between the number of men and women holds true, may be justly concluded from the obvious consequence of polygamy in Turkey; for to what other cause can it be attributed, that they have not a sufficient supply of women for their men? It is evident, that throughout the vast extent of the Mahometan dominions they have it not, but that women are daily imported amongst them from other countries: they are a merchandize of an exotic production; the

the price of which ebbs and flows, according to the plenty or scarcity of the market.

WAR supplies this want by the numbers of female captives it furnishes: the Turks in their excursions are very eager at seizing them; and women are then plenty and cheap.

BUT what is strange, in time of peace the mere poverty and misery of their neighbours the Georgians, who are a kind of Christians, oblige that wretched people to furnish spontaneously their choicest maidens to the Mahometan markets, as their country must starve and perish without that species of commerce.

I CANNOT help observing how the world has been imposed upon and amused with romantic stories of the artful and subtle amorous intrigues carried on with Turkish ladies. It is as easy to scale the heaven, as to come at them: their apartments are fortresses, most of them surrounded with high walls, and they have not a window which opens towards the street; their guardians are ever about them; and the secret can never be withheld from ten, twenty, or double that number of other women. They seldom  
or

or ever walk the streets but in infancy or old age ; the rich are never seen : and were opportunities to offer, which might render it possible for a Christian to attempt an intrigue with a Turkish woman, he knows, that on detection immediate death is his doom ; and that those who have been accessary, whether by encouragement or connivance, share the same fate.

It is difficult to give a just account of the manner in which Turks, men or women, spend their time when at home. Some of the former are undoubtedly studious, though most of them seem ever busied about money-affairs and their personal interest. When they are disposed to enjoy some relaxation or amusement among themselves, the diversions are story-telling, quaint jokes, chess or draughts, and not unfrequently dancers and musicians, who ply in the different parts of the town for employment.

IF none of the company is sufficiently facetious to entertain the rest with that low ribaldry in which they chiefly delight, they find some dependant, whether Greek, Armenian, or Jew, who acts the part. These take their place in the middle of the room, on their knees, and tell their story,  
or

or repeat their joke ; whilst the grave Turk smokes his pipe in the corner of the sofa, and comes out now and then with a smile, or a dry laugh.

GAMING they highly detest, and look on a *Coomerbas*, a gamester who plays for money, worse than a common thief ; no being is more odious in their eyes : they, therefore, never touch a chess-table, or a draught-board, but for mere amusement.

THEIR dancers they have from amongst the Greeks ; and what appears most unaccountable, unless we suppose it arises from the absolute contempt in which they hold that people, is, how it happens that the Turks, born in the same climate, and mixed some centuries with them, have not yet adopted their mirth and jollity ; and how they can hear and see them continually dancing and singing, without stirring a leg themselves, or joining in a chorus. Such of them as use the sea, are of necessity mixed amongst some hundreds of Greek mariners, who when they are on shore, or, indeed, on board their ship, are never without musick and dancing ; yet a Turk is never found revelling with them.

NAY,



NAY, the men of high, or even middling rank among them, seem to look on dancing, in respect of themselves, as unbecoming the dignity of man; befitting only the meanest and most abandoned of their species: they think with the ancient Romans—*Nemo fere saltat sobrius nisi forte insanit*: “No one dances, unless he is drunk or mad.”

THEY therefore never fall into that excess, except when they are quite mad, or almost dead drunk; indeed they never are so by halves; and then they seldom fail to call in, at least, the publick dancers, whose obscene gestures prohibit a glance of a chaste eye.

THEIR OWN vocal and instrumental musick they have in esteem. The vocal has a sharp, shrill tone, as it were, through the nose of the singer; the voice is nevertheless pleasing; and with all the discordancy of instruments, there is yet something great and martial in the combined sounds of the whole.

HOWEVER, no Turk of any fashion will deign to touch an \* instrument; they hire minstrels,

\* A well known Greek Vaivode, or prince, of Moldavia,

minstrels, or have women, or slaves, bred up for that purpose. But what is remarkable, neither Italian nor French music, vocal or instrumental, makes the least impression on them; their organs, or their conceptions, are not accommodated to such sounds; it seems to affect them like hearing an unknown language.

THE women's great accomplishments are singing and dancing; the men look on them as congenial to the sex; but they are practised in private only, amongst themselves, simply as domestic amusements, or to pass an idle hour. In many *Harems*, indeed, I have heard that they embroider and spin.

THE Grand Seigneur often diverts his ladies with a variety of recreations. In the month of May they have the great Tulip-feast, which requires vast preparations. There are in the gardens of the Seraglio large parterres of variegated tulips, which, on those days, are interspersed with all kinds of singing-birds; shops are erected round them, and furnished by the  
Grand

Moldavia, obtained that dignity by playing on the guitarre to one Ephraim, or Ibrahim Effendi, favourite of the Grand Seigneur's.

Grand Seigneur with all sorts of trinkets, toys, and rich stuffs: some of the most facetious females of his court are the shop-women; he buys from all, and regales all his ladies: at night the whole machinery is decorated with lamps, and makes a pleasing prospect even at a distance

GREAT men indulge their women with the like amusements, and on these occasions of festivity some call in neighbouring *Harems*; so that, perhaps, the women pass their time more happily and agreeably than we imagine, or at least enjoy more health and vigour than if they had operas, plays, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, balls and routes, continually preying on their constitutions, and abridging a short existence.

WINE is severely prohibited by their religion. Mahomet knew his sectaries too well to entrust them with the use of it; for they are strangers to moderation in their passions, and wine seems to have a different effect on their constitution, than on that of the rest of mankind; it drives them generally to fury, frenzy, and distraction. But notwithstanding the prohibition, the vice of drinking gains ground with the Turks, and imperceptably creeps from the lower to the higher stations: perhaps,

haps, in this instance, as in many other, restraint may quicken appetite and en-flame desire.

MEN of some distinction, even those in great offices, frequently make parties of what they call pleasure, merely to get dead drunk; and after lying two or three days wallowing in their liquor, return fresh and happy to their office.

A FREQUENT request of such christians as they know they can trust, is to procure them the best wine. Some principal officers, both in the Seraglio and the Porte, have so strong a passion for it, that they have invented small leathern boxes, in which they convey it home without the privity of their trustiest servants: and I have known others fill large leathern pipes which were pliant round their bodies, to carry wine surreptitiously into the Seraglio, at the risque, perhaps, of their lives.

WHEN it happens that towards the decline of life, religious scruples have seized them, or that those in high office have apprehended the Grand Seigneur might discover them by the odour of their morning's draught; they frequently change their wine to opium, which is equally intoxicating

ting, and perhaps attended with worse consequences, both to the corporeal and mental faculties. Some still continue that practice; but at present those among the great, who feel the scruple or fear the discovery, rather betake themselves to distilling strong waters, with which they are abundantly supplied from Zant and Corfu. The casuistry with which they silence their scruples is, that fire, which purifies all things, has, in distillation, destroyed and dissipated the impure parts of the wine; and that brandy is no where nominally interdicted by Mahomet. Thus they think they can distinguish away the *Koran*, cheat the devil, their prophet, and the Sultan.

THE vice of drinking wine, is, however, looked upon with detestation by the generality of Turks; and even the use of opium held a great disparagement a despicable practice. When they would depreciate the character of any considerable man who is known to chew it, they call him a *Tiriachi*, that is, an opium-eater; by which they mean, a mind extravagant and irregular.

To give a distinct detail of an object so vast and extensive as the military establish-

ments in Turkey, is not in the power of any mortal; I doubt whether any one man in their empire ever attempted it.

AT Constantinople there are an hundred and sixty-one *Oddas*, or chambers, of or rather for Janizaries, distinguished by their numerical order, as our regiments are, said to contain from eight hundred to a thousand each; but these different chambers are never fully inhabited by that actual number. Most of those whose names are enregistered as belonging to them, are dispersed throughout the empire, live as burghers mixed with the people, and follow different trades and professions.

THE policy of Sultan Mahmud, whose principal study and supreme object was his own security, has imperceptibly reduced that formidable body of militia, at least the part residing at Constantinople into a state of quiet dependance and submission.

ALL these *Oddas*, or chambers, originally intended for no more than forty thousand, are since that time augmented, and have at present, perhaps, \* a hundred and sixty

\* The number of Janizaries throughout the empire is reputed by some to be 2 or 300,000.

sixty thousand men, or more, belonging to them; but there are never within their walls above eight or ten thousand. These serve for a guard to the city, are formed to discipline accustomed to chastisement, bending to the stick, strangers to the ancient spirit of that soldiery, and are permitted no other weapon than a large taper club. If any of them should be guilty of insolence, or attempt to be refractory, he is immediately dispatched either to a frontier garrison or to the other world.

THE pay is small; so that many who call themselves of those chambers, almost disdain it: they receive the pay indeed, merely to be considered of that corps, and to enjoy its immunities, protection, and support.

The duties, or customs, are, properly speaking, farmed at Constantinople, and throughout the empire. The subjects of those Christian powers who are under capitulations, that is, who have treaties with the Grand Seignor, pay very low duties for goods imported from Christendom; but the Turkish subjects sufficiently compensate that difference: the officers of the customs charge them at pleasure, according to their will and caprice, eight, or ten,

and more in the hundred for whatever they import.

SULTAN Machmut, among other immunities, granted the Janizaries an exemption from these duties of importation. This has induced a surprising number of them to engage in the most lucrative parts of their coasting-trade; extending it even to Cairo, Syria, &c. and has effectually turned their martial into a commercial spirit. Thus by promoting industry, he hath introduced riches and luxury among them; so that many of those veterans, who formerly rejoiced in the confusion of rebellions and revolutions, are at present anxious for the tranquillity of government, for the sake of their own security and ease.

It does not follow, however, but that the provincial Janizaries, and other orders of soldiery on the frontier, would, at this day, appear as formidable in the field as they have ever been at least there is reason to apprehend it from their behaviour the last war.

THE Turkish cavalry consists in a regular body of about thirteen thousand Spahis: these are divided under six standards.

THE



THE pay of these two corps of infantry and cavalry, as it is distributed every six months at Constantinople, amounts to two thousand four hundred purses, of five hundred dollars each.

BESIDES these, there are the *Zaims* and *Timariots*, who hold feudal tenures, and are obliged, according to the value of the feud, to appear in the field, each with three or four horsemen, or more well mounted and accoutred. These are good troops, and exceeding numerous.

WE might add many other bodies of militia. There are the *Gebegys*, who have the care of the powder, ball, and all the ammunition for war: when they are complete they should amount to four thousand men.

THE *Topegys* are the cannoneers, and have nothing else under their care but the casting cannon, mortars, &c. and charging and levelling them: they form a body of two thousand men.

THE bombardeers are also a separate body, entirely employed in the practice of throwing bombs.

THIS

THIS sketch of the military force of the Ottoman empire must suffice for the present; since what we do know besides, imperfect as it is, might fill almost a volume. I just mention these different corps, that I might give some idea of the Turkish power, and shew, that in the military department, as in every other branch of government, the Turks observe fixed regulations and established order.

THE police of that great city of Constantinople is admirable. The Janizaries, I have observed, are the city-guard: with single clubs they keep all the inhabitants in subjection; no riots, no mobs, no disorders are known in the streets; at the least noise the delinquents are secured, confined, and punished.

IN Sultan Machmut's reign, about thirteen Asiatic Turks, prompted by enthusiasm, or inspired with the fumes of opium, ran in a body through Constantinople, exciting the people with most vociferous exclamation, and unceasing uproar, to instant rebellion, and exhorting them to raise their standard at the Hypodrome. They struck an universal terror through the inhabitants, the shops were all shut at once, and the outcry of a rebellion, spread itself  
over

over all the city. But these desperate rebels found none hardy enough, or sufficiently prepared, to join them. Their celerity was so great, that the Janizaries could not reach them. They pierced without an obstacle into the *Bezeftyn*, or great Exchange. Most of the shopkeepers there are Greeks: their ancient spirit arose, or rather, their own security obliged them to attack the rebels. Armed only with the poles which supported the shutters of their shops, they knocked down the Asiatic Mussulmen, who were all seized; whilst the brave Greeks, terrified at their victory, quitted their shops to seek an asylum, and to secure themselves against the rigour of the law, for having, as they thought, murdered the true believers.

THE Sultan's equity, however, soon dissipated their fears, and put a stop to any proceedings against them. He published, under the sanction of the *Musti*, not only a free pardon to the Greeks, but full permission to his subjects of any religion to destroy all disturbers of the public peace; he might have added, and of his own security.

FALSE weights are what the civil policy prosecutes and punish with the utmost rigour.

gour. The Vizir himself in person often visits the shops: the *Stamboul Effendi*, or judge of Constantinople, watches them assiduously. The bakers \* are the most frequent victims to the severity of their justice. If in any shop they find bread that is short of weight, they mulct and bastinado the baker for the first offence; but the second or third, after a summary process, produces a staple driven into the middle of his door-case, on which the offender is hanged; and it is not uncommon, as you pass the streets, to rub against a pendant Baker's body for three days successively: it is, however, inconceivable, that almost weekly examples cannot deter them from fraud.

\* They are mostly Armenians who exercise this trade.

## C H A P. XIII.

*Observations on the Greeks.*

**T**HE modern Greeks are a near image and resemblance of the ancient. Toocrafty and subtle, too intriguing, vain, and vindictive; either to support and maintain the interest, reputation, and glory of a republic; or to share with, and submit to government under a monarch of their own; their busy spirit seems exactly formed and adjusted to live no where tranquil but under a foreign subjection; where the heavy hand of power can depress the soaring ambition of their genius, and curb the violence of their passions; where severity can awe them to obedience, and if not to social virtue, at least to social quiet.

THE Turks have suffered them to retain some marks of honour, some traces of a former splendor; but these are entirely confined to the hierarchy of their church, and to three employments of profit and dignity in civil government.

THESE

THE former consists in their four patriarchs, and perhaps, one hundred and twenty other metropolitan bishops; the latter in the two vavodlicks, or principalities, of Walachia and of Moldavia; and the important office of *Drugoman*, or interpreter of the Porte, who is always a Greek, and through whose hands all foreign transactions must pass.

THE Turks zealously support the Greeks in these remains of honour; they are a never-failing source of wealth to the men in power; a sure profit, of which they can avail themselves without danger.

WHOEVER could live among the Greeks, and observe their refined intrigues, their eternal and continued contests for these ecclesiastical and civil dignities, would see a true portrait in miniature of the worst Peloponnesian republics, and a most striking resemblance of their abominable practices under their own emperors, from Constantine to the last of the Palæologus's.

A PATRIARCH of Constantinople must spend among the Turks ninety or a hundred thousand dollars, to obtain that dignity. He seldom lasts above three years: he is, during that time, continually studying

ing to secure himself on his \* throne. Several powerful Turks, his protectors, must have continued fees; he must devour the church to feed them; and in his precarious situation secure a considerable sum to protect or reinstate himself, after he is deposed and exiled.

If he acquires this supreme ecclesiastical dignity by favour of the Seraglio, the moment after his exaltation, his disappointed adversaries and competitors begin to undermine him, and contrive his ruin. Indifferent whether with truth or falsehood, they traduce and blacken him to the Vizir; strengthening and supporting their truth or calumny with a powerful present.

If the Porte patronizes him, and he has obtained the Vizir's protection, then they apply to the Seraglio, and attack him there with the same arms.

Or if they have only the same canal through which the patriarch obtained his advancement, from that moment, they are daily suggesting new causes for his deposition.

#### DIFFERENT

\* The Greeks call it the Patriarchal Throne; and they address him by the title *Agiate*, or, *Most Holy*.

DIFFERENT factions, which continually exist among the Greeks, unite together to effect his ruin, and jointly contribute to support the expence of these intrigues; and often personal hate or family enmity, but most commonly interested views cement the union.

THE Metropolitans, who generally reside at Constantinople, exert all their art to circumvent each other; make use of every moment, and employ every means, to depose a patriarch, or to get themselves promoted to a better bishoprick; and care not who they distress or ruin, provided they succeed.

HENCE there are continually some of them in exile. Sometimes the man whose money has had sufficient influence with some powerful Turk to procure his enemy's proscription, is himself in the same case the next day; for another Turk of superior weight, and actuated by the same motive, finds out and affords the banished man the easy means of retaliation: in short, these ecclesiastics are a constant lucrative game in the hands of the Turks, which they take care to play so artfully that it never ends.



A METROPOLITAN had fixed his eye on an archbishoprick, which he was determined to have at any price. During the life of the archbishop, all his attempts were in vain; though, in good truth, the archbishop's character was such, as might furnish abundant reasons even for a Turk to depose him.

At length the archbishop had a paralytic stroke; he dropt suddenly down, and was thought dead. Preparations were made for his funeral. The grand ceremony is to seat the dead prelate in his pontifical throne, dressed in his pontifical robes, while he thus sits in state, two chaplains attend at the door of the room, where all of the Greek religion are admitted to pay their last duty to him, and to kiss his hand: they think it a meritorious act, a kind of religious duty.

THE time allotted for this ceremony was elapsed, the moment approached for his interment, the coffin lay at the side of his throne, with all the requisites for finally closing it up, when some of the principal men amongst the Greeks who could not attend before, earnestly pressed his two chaplains for admittance into the room, but were told it was then too late. They  
 presisted,

persisted, however, in their request; and though the usual hour was past, such was the importance of these pious visitors, the chaplains dared not refuse. One of them advanced before the company; and as he approached, the archbishop opened his eyes, cried out for a glass of water, and asked, what meant that dismal apparatus of the coffin? Surprize and astonishment seized priest and people; they ran out of the room in amaze: the other chaplain, after some hesitation, boldly adventured, cross in hand, to approach the archbishop, administered to his wants, and satisfied his enquiry.

DURING the interval in which the report of the archbishop's death prevailed, the Metropolitan applied to the slave of the *Kissar-Aga*, and offered to pay him down immediately six thousand sequins for the archbishoprick. All was agreed on, the money was paid, and the command from the Porto, which is their *Congé d'Elire*, was to be immediately made out. A few minutes after, news being brought to the Metropolitan that the archbishop was recovered, and alive, he went in haste to the slave, and begged for his money again; but the slave told him with a grave and composed mein, it was the same thing  
whether

whether he paid it then, or some time after, for the archbishop could not live long; counselled him to remain quiet; and promised, that although he would in the mean time keep the money, the Metropolitan might look upon himself as heir apparent to the archbishoprick. The Black, his slave, and dependants, fell a sacrifice to the publick two months after the archbishop's resurrection, who lived, however, two years after, to laugh at the folly of his pseudo-successor, who, in fact, never succeeded.

BUT the arts, practices, and intrigues among the clergy are trifling, when compared with the extent and profundity, the labour, toil, and perseverance of those carried on among the pretenders to the Vayvodlicks of Walachia and Moldavia; they ransack heaven and earth for means to destroy each other.

THERE are always, when two are in power, two or three of the deposed who are endeavouring to be re-instated; they spare no cost; they have the purses ready of many expectants, as well as of their own dependants, who have shared the plunder of those countries with them before; or if that is not sufficient, they promise

mise the sum required, which they may securely do; for when once they are named, they find money at twenty-four for the hundred interest, altho' it often happens that the principal is never repaid.

It has been known that they have disbursed, at the moment of taking possession, from \* fifteen hundred to two thousand purses of money to the Porte.

THE intrigues they carry on have been so deep and dangerous, that they have cost many, even opulent, Greeks their lives which they have miserably finished in a halter at their own doors. A Frank residing at Constantinople, who threw himself as a dependant on a deposed Vaywode, and who thought himself sufficiently protected, ventured to send a scheme to his correspondent in Moldavia for exciting that people to rebel against the Vaywode in possession, accompanying it with severe reflections on the Turkish government; he sent it by what he esteemed the securest conveyance. His letter, notwithstanding his precaution, was intercepted, and he lost his head near the Seraglio: no solicitations could save him.

\* Ninety-three to an hundred and twenty thousand pounds.

THE

THE revenues of these principalities are racked to an inconceivable height. The princes justify that oppression by the constant demand from the Porte: their purses must be ever opened, or they are instantly deposed. Those of Walachia are said to amount to three thousand purses the year, but most people think it nearer four. Moldavia is said to produce seventeen hundred purses; but is estimated nearer two thousand five hundred.

THE contrast observable between the behaviour of these mock princes in power, and out of it, shews the degeneracy of the Greek character in a most glaring light. Ostentatious pride, empty vanity, contemptuous insolence, acts of tyranny and oppression, attend their prosperity: Deposed, you see them dejected, pliant, base, groveling, even to most abject servility. I have known them carried before the *Stambole Effendi*, or judge of Constantinople, for debt, and deny their own handwriting.

THEY are seldom deposed without imprisonment or exile, and being stripped of a large sum; but when they throw forth more of their ill-gotten wealth into Turkish bosoms,

bosoms, they appear again at large; and, often, soon after remount the throne.

WHATEVER arts and sciences, whatever virtues might have been found in ancient times among the Greek republicans, seem to have been obscured or totally lost, under their emperor. The present Greeks have not a trace of them remaining. Their ancient language, or the literal Greek, as they call it, is a dead language: when they do understand it, they have learned it at school.

THE art of healing, so necessary to the human species, so much cultivated, and so highly honoured in ancient Greece, seems to be no farther considered among the present race than as one of the fairest means of introducing themselves to the favour of Turks in power, and a species of traffic, by which they may with most probability expect to advance their fortune: the rest of them are strangers, I fear, as much to the integrity, as to the abilities, of their great countryman Hippocrates.

AMONG the many practitioners in physick at Constantinople, are some few of the Greeks who have studied at Padua with tolerable success; but the greater number  
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are absolutely ignorant of the first principles of the art : they have most of them taken no other degree than what is conferred on them by the mere *fiat* of the *Echim Pasbi*, or chief physician to the Grand Seigneur. This they obtain for a small fee : it authorizes them to open a shop ; and thus qualified, they think themselves avowedly privileged to sport with the lives and purses of their unfortunate patients. Shops are the diploma to practice ; the sale of drugs, good or bad, must furnish them with subsistence ; for the Turks are strangers to giving fees, excepting to physicians under ambassadorial protection, and who have no shops : even then their fees are bestowed very sparingly.

A GREEK physician of some note finding himself in a time of pestilence, unable to retreat into the country for want of money, set his wits to work how to provide it : they are fertile in resource on such occasions. A Turk of high rank and great opulence had an only son, who happened just at that time to have a slight indisposition, occasioned by the eruption of a great boil. The Doctor, working on paternal tenderness and paternal fear, soon persuaded the father it was the plague, tho' he

he hoped of the less malignant kind. The father, alarmed, intreated and conjured him to undertake his cure. The physician, appearing to be seized with horrid apprehensions, hesitated, doubted, and at last told him, that he knew but one possible method to ensure success, which was by administering the Bezoar stone, if he could by any ways and means procure it; for that it was extremely difficult to be found, and excessively dear. The father pressed, intreated, conjured, that he would obtain one at any rate. The physician feigning great anxiety and perplexity where, and how to find it, left him with seeming despair of success; pretending to go and seek for it: he returned, as if he had miraculously found one, though he had it in his pocket before. He had purchased it for ten shillings, but he demanded of the Turk twenty-five pounds as the lowest price, and it was paid him. The cure succeeded, and the physician retired to the country, boasting of his great abilities, which had supplied his immediate necessity by so ingenious, and, as he thought, laudable an expedient.

ANOTHER physician, of more eminence in his time, gave out, that he could at all times command pregnancy in women by  
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an infallible arcanum; that though he had made the discovery with great study and expence, he would not conceal it; for as no other physicians had it in their shops, he was the only one could supply the afflicted with it; that, in short, it was simply pure lion's urine. Buyers flocked to him; he prepared his own urine, and sold it at an extravagant rate. If complaints were brought him that the medicine did not succeed, the excuse was at hand; it was always some fault either in the time or manner of administering his medicine: he knew that with women he could not be admitted to correct either.

ANY common servant to a physician of any tolerable reputation, after a few years service, were it only in beating at the mortar, or even in carrying about drugs, thinks himself sufficiently skilled in the medical art to stand on his own bottom, and killed by diploma.

I HAVE known a Greek of great eminence and practice much favoured by a Vizir; yet this Doctor could not write.

THE Armenians, with seeming ponde-  
rous stupidity in their countenance and  
make, are yet, as to all animal wants, as  
subtle

subtle and designing a people as the Greeks.

THEY are reckoned the best grooms in Turkey; and by the care they take of a horse, seem to have something in their nature congenial with that animal. One of them, who had served many years in that capacity, advanced his station by being admitted as a menial household servant to a private gentleman. His master fell into a languor, and though long attended by an able physician, died.

AFTER his death, the Armenian, disdaining servitude, set up for a physician.

HE was observed one day going to a Turk of great distinction, attended by several servants, and treated with uncommon respect. The question being asked who he was, it was answered, An eminent Armenian physician.

SOME time after, one who knew him, expostulated with him on his insolence and temerity; and asked him, where, and by what means he could fancy he had learned physic? how he dared expose his own life, which would be forfeited,

feited, the first Turk his ignorance should kill?

HE answered, he had sufficiently learned that art from the physician who formerly attended his master; and who he was certain administered medicines with great caution; that as he had observed his master, in most disorders, occasioned by colds, had made use of warm punch, of which the Doctor also usually partook, he had, for that reason, conceived a high opinion of it, had tried it on himself with success; and therefore, he limited his prescription to that medicine only; and as it was exceedingly agreeable and palatable to the great men who employed him, and generally successful, he was amply rewarded for it.

THE city of Constantinople actually swarms with such wretches, or rather, indeed, worse: they are, it is thought, increased within these forty years to above a thousand.

IF the modern Greeks are almost strangers to the virtues, or to all arts and learning of the ancients, they have surprisingly retained their levity. Without the least knowledge of Homer, Aiacreon, or Theo-

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critus,

critus, they abound in poetry, such as it is, love-songs, ballads, and pastorals ; they are eternally singing or dancing.

THEY have carefully preserved the Cretan Lyre, and Pan's pipe, the *septem imparibus calamis*, " seven unequal reeds," and also the pipe of the Arcadian Shepherds.

THEY still use the ancient long dance led by one person, either with women alone, or intermixed with men and women, called by pre-eminence the *Romeika*, or Greek dance.

THEY have also the manly martial Pyrrhic dance, and those most obscene infamous love-dances, accompanied with the *Ionici Motus*, offensive to all modesty and decency.

## C H A P. XIV.

*On the religion of the Greeks.*

**B**EFORE I dismiss the Greeks, I shall take some notice of the state of religion amongst them, and produce some facts to illustrate what I advance.

THE name of Christian, which they profess, with great constancy, under the oppression of Turkish government, has induced us to commiserate their sufferings; while their abhorrence of popery, and the unremitting hate with which they are persecuted by the Romanists, has recommended them to Protestants of every denomination; and has persuaded us, that their religion has a respectable share of purity both in its doctrines and practice.

ABOUT the time of the Reformation, and more especially in the reign of James I. even those inclined to Puritanism entertained a favourable opinion of the Greek church. Cyrillus Lucaris, patriarch of

Constantinople, had almost persuaded archbishop Abbot, that his doctrines did not differ from perfect Calvinism. The patriarch meant no more by this, than to obtain the favour of the English court, and the protection of their ambassador at Constantinople; supposing it the most probable means, of securing himself from the violent persecution raised against him by the ministers of the Roman Catholic powers, who, at that time, with the most assiduous activity, and at a prodigious expence, in support of their own missionaries, attempted the subversion of the Greek church; but it must be acknowledged, that he gave a very false account of his religion.

It is with great reluctance that I repeat the melancholy truth, but it is the truth, the Greeks, like some other sects of Christians, have entirely neglected to cultivate the genuine practice of true religion: they seem to have forgotten those real, and perhaps, only terms, on which mortals can render themselves acceptable to the Deity; that purity of manners, brotherly love, forgiveness of injuries, justice in our dealings, and those other Christian duties every where inculcated in the gospel of Christ; while the name of religion is solely

ly appropriated to the firm belief of certain mysteries, and the regular practice of various external acts of humiliation and worship, with a strict observance of many austere fasts and rigorous mortifications, which at best can be only attended as the means by which to facilitate our approach to practical Christian perfection.

HENCE it is, that the Greeks seem to look on the eternal laws of social and moral virtue as the shadow only, and the arbitrary injunctions of their church, as the very essence of Christianity; and they think to compound for the total neglect of the first, by a rigid observance of the latter; inasmuch that a Greek of the most depraved manners would suffer almost any thing, sooner than break a religious fast: the Armenians, indeed, surpass them in the number and austerity of these fasts, and in the strictness of their abstinence.

ALTHOUGH the love of money is not less predominant with the Greeks than with the Turks, yet their purses are ever open for the support of the ecclesiastical dignity, the building and decoration of their churches, and the maintenance of their claims to the exclusive possession of the holy

holy places in Palestine, against the Romanists, who make the like claim.

At the accession of Sultan Mustapha, their present emperor, the Greek churches were in a ruinous condition; one of them had been almost entirely burnt down: the Mahomedan law does not permit new churches to be erected; even large repairs are prohibited. On the birth of the Sultan's first child, the Vizir suggested to his Sovereign what kind of favours he should confer on his different subjects, during the ten days appointed for the rejoicings on that great event, so important to the peace of the empire. Amongst others he mentioned, as a most acceptable indulgence to the Greeks, a permission to repair that church which the fire had almost destroyed: he durst not ask leave to rebuild it, though there was scarce a wall standing. The Grand Seignior condescended to grant them the ten days for that repair. No sooner was this known, but every Greek mason and labourer quitted all his other work, and flew to contribute his assistance at the church: two or three thousand men constantly relieving each other, the whole was accomplished, and the church rebuilt, in less time than was allowed for the repair, and that without any one disbursing a sixpence.



pence. The only reward the workmen received for their indefatigable labour was conscious merit, and the priests blessings. Let this suffice for an instance of their zeal.

I WOULD wish to throw a veil over the scandalous contentions which have been carried on between the Greeks and Romaniſts on account of Bethlehem, and the Holy-Land, as it is called : the iniquitous proceedings attending them are ſo enormous, as ſhamefully to diſgrace the Chriſtian name. The ambaffador who protects the intereſt of the Romiſh religion, becomes, on theſe occaſions, notwithſtanding his high dignity, a real object of compaſſion.

IMMENSE ſums are raiſed in all the countries of the Romiſh perſuaſion, to ſupport them againſt the Greeks, in their pretenſions to a ſpot of ground which they fancy ſacred ; and to preſerve in the hands of popiſh monks and friars the remains of an old ſtable at Bethlehem, where a chapel is built, and in which on the authority of an uncertain oral tradition they ſuppoſe Chriſt was born ; and alſo a ſepulchre, which may, but moſt probably may not, be what they call it, his ſepulchre :

chre : the exact situations of both places, are at present as unknown, as that of Julius Cæsar's urn.

WHY the princes of Christendom will suffer their countries to be despoiled of so much wealth, and permit it to be paid on this account, as a tribute into the hands of the Turks, is hardly conceivable ; and why no angel has flown, or swam, across the sea with this sepulchre, or this manger, as with the house at Loretto, is yet a greater wonder. Princes, it should seem, still permit this tribute to be paid to the Turks, because they have thought it best to leave this business as they found it ; and not chusing to meddle with what are called religious matters, suffer the clergy to go still on with the same practices as prevailed in the times of the darkest ignorance, and the most extravagant superstition. At present, few or no pilgrims of the Romish persuasion resort to these places of devotion. So that the most probable reasons to be assigned for the attachment of their clergy to the possession of them are, that it occasions much money to pass thro' their hands, and that it affords a maintenance for about an hundred and fixty idle monks and friars who are distributed about that country.

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IN the contest between the Greeks and Romanists for the right possessing the chapel at Bethlehem, and the stable, treasures have been expended by both parties, to the great emolument of the Turks, who take care, from time to time, to spirit up the dispute, giving sentence sometimes in favour of the one, and sometimes of the other. Under Ragib Pasha's government, it was finally determined in favour of the Greeks, at an expence equivalent at least to 10,000 l. sterling.

THE Holy Sepulchre has been, and still is, as great an object of contention between them and a prodigious annual expence to both.

BUT what is worse, the Turks knowing the riches and obstinacy of these contending parties, find numberless other pretences to pillage their wealth. The caravan for Mecca passes near Jerusalem. When it approaches that holy city, the *Emir Hadge* either enters in person, or sends a message to demand a lone from the Greek and Romish convents; or perhaps, on some pretence of right, to exact a sum of money, 20, or 30,000 l. sterling from each party: they dare not refuse. If it be a lone, it is never repaid; if on a pretence  
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of right, be it ever so groundless, the sum is irrecoverably lost, and never heard of more.

THE Greeks behave with much prudence on these occasions; they stifle their complaints, bear the loss, and immediately replenish the fund, that they may again be in a condition to combat the *Pasbas* and the Romanists: they would even sell their children rather than permit the latter to triumph over them.

THE ambassador, whose peculiar charge it is to protect the Romanists, wears out his very soul in fruitless application at the Porte to recover the sum of which his convent has been stripped. With much difficulty he may obtain the Sultan's command in his favour, that is, an order for reimbursement; but it procures him no money; and what is more vexatious, he is frequently imposed on, by the misrepresentations and downright falsities of these priests and monks established in Palestine; who are continually pestering him with slanderous accusations against the Greeks: he is officially bound to support them; and after suffering in his credit at the Turkish court, by the mortifications he is obliged passively to bear, when these falsi-

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ties are detested ; he is, nevertheless, reviled at Rome by the whole body of clergy, as a lukewarm Christian, and an unskilful politician.

THE Greek system of religious opinions and their mode of worship, is pretty generally known. They agree with the Romanists in the main points of the doctrine of the corporeal presence, their veneration for saints, and the adoration they pay to the Virgin Mary ; in their image-worship they differ : they honour paintings, but allow of no sculpture. The procession of the Holy Ghost is another, and most important article of dissension ; they hold it is from the Father only. And, they scoff at the pope's pretensions to infallibility, and at his claim to be supreme head of the universal Christian church. Their clergy give no previous dispensation for the omission of any religious duty, but reserve the absolution of all transgressions and sins till after they are committed.

ABSURD and superstitious practices abound among them, and frequent abuses happen, the natural concomitants of uninformed credulity, not peculiar to the Greeks only : one of a singular nature was carried on a few years ago, by a *Caloyero* ;  
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or monk. He had some years before been noted for his irregular and profligate life, and had been in the galleys at Constantinople. On being released, he affected an extraordinary degree of sanctity, and enthusiastic fits of devotion. If he did not lay claim to the higher gifts of miraculous powers, he at least pretended to have celestial communications, and to be endowed with the peculiar grace of ensuring to ancient women, happiness in the world to come; and to the young and middle-aged women, the happiness of this world, children. Barrenness is looked upon in Turkey as a curse: women who bear no children are hardly treated with common civility, the sovereign good and honour therefore of every married woman in that country, is to be a good breeder. The hope of becoming mothers, it may of course be imagined, led shoals of unhappy females to the new saint; the privileged dispenser of pregnancy.

He established himself at Caterlee, a village in Asia, to which you pass by water in a few hours from Constantinople; his emissaries were dispersed through all the neighbourhood, and wherever they went, spread the fame of his sanctity and his marvellous gifts. Devotees flocked to him :

him: it was reckoned that eight thousand women, of different ages, ran, in a short time, to participate of such desirable graces. The saint was a stout saint, of a middle age, and never failed to send away his female votaries perfectly edified.

SOME men at length visited him, and seemingly approved his proceedings; not that they really believed in his pretensions to sanctity, but because they would not, by publishing their suspicions, cast the least shadow of injury on the character of their women. They wished the sterility of their wives removed, but they apprehended the means might be disagreeable to themselves. The journey was pleasant, the passage by water convenient, and other adventures might co-operate with the saint's spiritual endeavours. Hints of this were given to the Turks, who soon made this impostor decamp. He was not heard of afterwards. He did not, however, quit his vocation empty-handed; for the conditions of approaching him was the purchase of a consecrated wax-taper, besides a free-gift; in both which articles, religious zeal, and the desire of becoming mothers, had engaged the good women to pay most generously.

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THE Greek religion, I am, however, told, is better supported, and maintained with greater purity, on its primitive foundation in other countries where it is profest, undisturbed by Mahommedans or Romanists. Nor would I be thought to mean, that there are no self-denying Metropolitans, and other honest men, even amongst those in Turkey.

F I N I S.



